Explore the
Solent Area
On Foot and Online

Isle of Wight, New Forest,
Portsmouth, Southampton,
and surrounding region

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This is the first draft of a guide to the Solent Area: South Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. I intend to review this draft then publish a revised and corrected version next year.

To support a wide range of devices, this document is available in both PDF and EPUB format.

Andy Gravell asserts his moral right to be identified as the author of this work. If you have any concerns about accuracy, corrections, or additions, please contact him via gravellandy@gmail.com.

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Explore the Solent Area On Foot and Online: Introduction

This guide lists and describes the main Solent attractions, and summarises its history. Walking routes take you round the cities and towns in this central southern area. A selection of coastal, riverside, and countryside walks is also provided. Each section has links to web sites with further details, so you can explore south Hampshire and the Isle of Wight online as well as on foot.

Solent residents can use this guide to learn more about their home area's attractions and history, and plan day trips to somewhere new. Visitors can use it to plan a short city break to Portsmouth or Southampton. You can also use it to plan a longer break based in the region, for example in the New Forest or on Isle of Wight, with day trips to sites of interest and nearby walks.

Contents

Solent Region

Tourist Attractions | Walks and Cycle Routes
Story of the Solent | History to 1700
Transport Networks | Civic History
Military History | Royal Solent
New Forest | Winchester

Isle of Wight

About the Isle of Wight | Royal Wight
Tourism on the Island | Walking on the Island
Island History | Modern History
Forts and Castles | Industry on the Island
Literary Wight | Cowes
Newport | Ryde
Sandown and Shanklin | Ventnor & West Wight

Portsmouth

About Portsmouth | Portsmouth Timeline
Geography | Early History
Naval and Military History from 1600 to 1900
Naval and Military History from 1900
Civic History from 1700 | Civic History from 1850

Southampton

About Southampton | City Centre Sights
Walking in Southampton for Adults and Children
Walk the Town Walls | Titanic Trail
Historic Old Streets | Maritime Quarter Walk
Walk the Central Parks | Central Southampton Green Walk | Green and Blue Walks
Southampton Timelines | Maps of Southampton
Pre- and Early History
Norman and Medieval Southampton
Southampton in the 1500s and 1600s
Shipbuilding and Sailing in Southampton
Southampton's Spa Period
Southampton High Street in the 1800s
Southampton Docks and Railway
Mail, Passenger and Cruise Lines
Southampton Industry from 1700
Aviation in Southampton and the Solent Region
Bridges of Southampton
Military Southampton | Civic Southampton

Additional Material

Quiz Questions | Lists of Sources

There are many attractions here and a rich heritage which has often featured in Britain's story. You can walk along medieval town walls and sea defences, visit historic dockyards, royal castles and palaces, and spend time in museums discovering the Mary Rose, Victory, Spitfire, classic cars and hovercraft, learn more about the Titanic and D-Day, and take in a show at a top rated theatre.

On both sides of the Solent there are beautiful seaside and river walks, fine botanic gardens, and many green protected spaces and bird reserves. You can enjoy walking around picturesque towns and villages in the New Forest and on the Isle of Wight. Children can enjoy the region's two

popular theme parks, three seaside funfairs, water and land-based activity centres, and many wildlife attractions. North of the Solent there are highly rated shingle beaches at Milford on Sea, Lepe, Calshot, Netley, Lee-on-the-Solent, and Hayling Island. The Isle of Wight has many fine sandy beaches, including Ryde, Sandown and Shanklin, with sea-side amenities, two piers and a theatre.

The region is well connected by road and public transport. If you get a good deal on your accommodation you can happily spend a week or more visiting the wider Solent region. Every year over a million people pass through Portsmouth on an international ferry or cruise ship, and millions more take a cruise from the port of Southampton. Rather than going through these historic port cities and the Solent region without stopping, why not extend your holiday here?

Strictly speaking, the Solent is the body of water separating the Isle of Wight from the mainland. Informally it is often considered to include Southampton Water, the tidal estuary running from the port of Southampton down to the Isle of Wight. The Solent region therefore includes anywhere within 10 miles, say, or twenty minutes drive to one of these bodies of water. Lyndhurst, Newport, Portsmouth, and Southampton are regional centres. Bournemouth, Chichester, Salisbury, and Winchester are only a short distance outside the region as defined here, and also easy to visit.

The Solent has some stunning hotels and guest houses right by the water. Alternatively you may find cheaper accommodation inland. The region has 20 Premier Inn hotels and a dozen Travelodges. During the summer you can camp on the Isle of Wight, in the New Forest, or in Netley country park. Before you decide where to book your break, it makes sense to spend some time considering which sights you would most like to see. It takes about an hour to drive from Lymington at the west of the Solent region, to Portsmouth at the other end. Driving the length of the Isle of Wight from the Needles to Bembridge is also around an hour. Depending on where you plan to visit, you could cut down travel time by staying more centrally, for example in Southampton, Fareham, or Eastleigh on the mainland, or Newport on the Isle of Wight.

If you plan to use public transport to get around on the mainland, the fastest train times are roughly as shown below. In the summer, taking a train to Bournemouth, Chichester, or Salisbury may be more sensible than driving as traffic is often heavier and city centre parking may be more difficult at that time of year. You should double check the on-line live timetable before setting off:

	Winchester	Southampton	Salisbury	Portsmouth	Chichester	Bournemouth
Eastleigh	10	15	50	25	50	50
Fareham	50	30	55	20	30	65
Lymington	55	30	75	85	100	50
Portsmouth	55	45	75		25	95
Southampton	30		30	45	55	40

You can also use the public transport networks to follow a linear walk: instead of returning to your starting point, why not walk along one of the region's long distance trails from one train station or bus stop to another. There are some wonderful stretches of coast path and hill views to enjoy.

About this Guide

I live in Southampton, the UK's busiest cruise port. Many passengers travel down to Southampton for their cruise, and back home again, without stopping in the city. Those who do stop, often struggle to find the sights they want to visit, or are unaware of the possibilities. They may be given a copy of the official tourist map, but this only lists a dozen or so places tourists might visit. The map does not show you, for example, all the places associated with the Titanic. Of course, it is possible to use Google to search for this information, but doing so is not convenient when you are walking along a busy street. Likewise there are plenty of books about the city, but visitors probably do not have the time to track down the right book and read through it to find the answers to their questions about the city.

I soon realised that anyone visiting Southampton for a week, say, will no doubt want to go and see some of the nearby attractions in Portsmouth or the New Forest, on the Isle of Wight, or the wider Solent region. Likewise anyone staying in Portsmouth, the New Forest, or on the Isle of Wight will also want to travel to see the other attractions nearby. The project therefore expanded to include these other popular destinations. Wherever you are based in the Solent region you are not far from the Isle of Wight, the New Forest, Portsmouth, and Southampton. If you are planning to stay for a long weekend or longer, you should certainly consider taking day trips to experience some of the many other local sights. Wherever you are, there is plenty to see without travelling too far.

It seemed clear to me that people would benefit from an electronic source split into short independent sections with maps and walks for them to follow. To ensure the guide is helpful the topics here are each covered in around 2 or 4 pages long. These are easy to print out or browse on-line. This arrangement makes it easier to locate and dive into specific articles. You can read these in any convenient order. There may be some overlap between certain pages, but that can be viewed as an advantage: a little repetition might help you to remember key facts.

A number of tourist web sites have adopted a similar approach, presenting information in short chunks. But these sites are rather limited, only providing the main highlights. Some claim to list the top 10 things for you to see in Southampton, whereas there are dozens of places which may be worth seeing or visiting, depending on your interests. Bizarrely, one web site suggests you might visit Windsor as one of the Southampton top 10 sights. Fortunately, there is no need to travel so far. This guide, instead, covers attractions you can walk to or travel to see in under an hour.

Visitors might then be encouraged to stay for longer, and more enjoyably. Rather than trying to visit everything in a couple of hours, you can take a day or two to see more of the Solent's sights. This guide gives a number of walking routes you can choose from. The sections also provide historical context to help you understand how the surviving buildings represent the rich and varied history. Of course, no one guide can cover this history in depth, so each of the topics covered here also includes links to web sites with more details and extra background information.

If you are like me, history makes more sense after you have seen where it happened. That is why the title of this site encourages you to Explore On Foot and Online. You are encouraged to look for

yourself, and understand what you have seen by browsing and reading web-based sources. If you have the time, you will probably see more and understand more if you can walk around in your own time rather taking a guided tour on a tourist coach or hop-on hop-off bus, when someone else is in charge of your itinerary and they have their own schedule and script.

To see all the top-rated attractions in Portsmouth, in Southampton, on the Isle of Wight, in the New Forest, and the wider Solent region, you would need several weeks, so you can afford to be selective. You might focus on those with a royal connection; those with military significance; nature reserves, parks and gardens; beaches and coastal walks; wildlife attractions; or nautical and transport history. Or you can take in a mix of sights with a variety of themes. Hence the full title of this guide invites you to Explore the Solent Area On Foot and Online.

If you printed the full guide you would have over 200 pages of information, too much to take in all at once, so you are recommended to browse it one section at a time. I have included a number of quiz questions. Taking these quizzes may be a fun way to memorise relevant and interesting facts, and deepen your knowledge of the region. After answering each question you will see whether you got the answer right, and also a link to an external web page explaining why this answer is correct, and giving you some additional information about the topic.

Sadly, the internet is capable of spreading disinformation as well as information. In putting together my historical summaries I have looked for a number of independent sources which are in agreement with each other. Some web sites are clearly more trustworthy than others. I am particularly grateful to Wikipedia, Sotonopedia, and Wightpedia for their reliable and wide-ranging information. On-line newspapers such as the Southampton Daily Echo, and Isle of Wight County Press from time to time publish articles summarising interesting local history. And I have also found dozens of more specialist sites with in-depth information on topics reflecting one person's or one group's passion or hobby. Where possible, I have used on-line sources, as these make the information easier to share than facts from printed texts.

Despite my caution, there will no doubt be a number of errors in this web site. Please feel free to contact me to report problems using the email below. I will correct any mistakes and acknowledge your contribution. As time passes some attractions close, and new ones are open. Please let me know if you find that information here is no longer up to date. My email address is given below.

In a spirit of openness, I decided to publish this guide electronically via the web. Please respect my moral right to be identified as their author, and do not copy the pages without first receiving my written permission. To request permission you should contact me via my email address, gravellandy@gmail.com, which I monitor regularly. In your request, please explain what material you want to copy, and why, and who will be the audience.

Part I
Solent Region

Solent Tourist Attractions

There are many tourist attractions in the Solent region, most of which well rated. The lists below give links and summary information about some of them. The star ratings were taken from Google at the time of writing. Of course, you might prefer to spend your time here walking and cycling around without ever paying for entry to any tourist attraction. After all, there are many places you can visit for free. On the other hand, one of these attractions may be the highlight of your holiday, so it is worth deciding whether any of them are of interest to you. Prices are indicative only. Advance booking online may be cheaper. Many attractions also have children and family tickets.

Activity Centres

- Calshot Activities Centre, New Forest, rated 4.5/5, £ depends on activity
- Exploria Activity Centre, Southsea, rated 4.3/5, £5-8 per hour, depends on age
- Go Ape, Southampton, rated 4.7/5, £ depends on activity
- Mountbatten Sports Centre, Portsmouth, rated 4.0/5, £ depends on activity
- Quays Swimming & Diving Complex, Southampton, rated 3.6/5, £8.30 per hour
- Southampton Outdoor Sports Centre, rated 4.2/5, £ depends on activity
- Water Activities Centre, Southampton, rated 4.8/5, £ depends on activity
- Woodmill Outdoor Activity Centre, Southampton, rated 4.6/5, £ depends on activity

Funfairs and Theme Parks

- The Needles Landmark Attraction, Isle of Wight, rated 4.3/5, £6 car parking, £1 per ride
- Clarence Pier, Southsea, rated 4.2/5, £15 wristband covers 10 rides
- Blackgang Chine, Isle of Wight, rated 4.4/5, standard entry £18, depends on the date
- Paultons Park, Romsey, rated 4.7/5, up to £58.50, depends on the date
- Peter Pan Funfair, Ryde, rated 4.0/5, free entry, £ depends on the activity
- Sandham Gardens, Sandown, rated 4.3/5, £22 combined ticket

Gardens and Parks

- Exbury Gardens, New Forest, rated 4.7/5, £17 standard ticket, depends on the date
- Furzey Garden, New Forest, rated 4.7/5, £9.50 donation is suggested
- Hillier Gardens, Romsey, rated 4.7/5, £16.50 standard ticket
- Itchen Valley Country Park, Southampton, rated 4.5/5, up to £2.20 per hour to park
- Lepe Country Park and Beach, New Forest, rated 4.5/5, up to £2.50 per hour to park
- Royal Victoria Country Park, Netley, rated 4.7/5, up to £2.50 per hour to park
- Queen Elizabeth Country Park, Horndean, rated 4.6/5, up to £2.50 per hour to park
- Ventnor Botanic Garden, Isle of Wight, rated 4.2/5, £13.50 ticket including parking

Heritage and Historical Sites

- Brading Roman Villa, Isle of Wight, rated 4.5/5, £14.60 standard ticket
- Bursledon Brickworks, Southampton, rated 4.6/5, £10.50 standard ticket
- Carisbrooke Castle, Isle of Wight, rated 4.6/5, £13.10 standard ticket
- Fishbourne Roman Palace, Chichester, rated 4.5/5, £13.95 standard ticket
- Fort Nelson, Portsmouth, rated 4.7/5, free entry, £3 to park
- Great Hall, Winchester, rated 4.4/5, £9 standard ticket
- Historic Dock Yard, Portsmouth, rated 4.7/5, £36 ticket covers one attraction

- Osborne House, Isle of Wight, rated 4.6/5, £23.62 standard ticket, depends on the date
- Portchester Castle, Fareham, rated 4.6/5, standard ticket £11, grounds are free
- St Cross Hospital, Winchester, rated 4.7/5, £7.50 standard ticket
- Winchester Cathedral, rated 4.7/5, £14 standard entry

Theatres and Concert Halls

- Chesil Theatre, Winchester, rated 4.6/5, £ ticket price varies
- Kings Theatre, Southsea, rated 4.6/5, £ ticket price varies
- Mayflower Theatre, Southampton, rated 4.7/5, £ ticket price varies
- New Theatre Royal, Portsmouth, rated 4.6/5, £ ticket price varies
- Shanklin Theatre, Isle of Wight, rated 4.7/5, £ ticket price varies
- Theatre Royal, Winchester, rated 4.6/5, £ ticket price varies
- Titchfield Festival Theatre, Solent, rated 4.8/5, £ ticket price varies
- Turner Sims, Southampton, rated 4.7/5, £ ticket price varies

Transport

- Beaulieu Motor Museum, New Forest, rated 4.7/5, £27 advance online ticket
- Bucklers Hard, New Forest, rated 4.1/5, free entry, car park up to £2.80 per hour
- D-Day Story, Portsmouth, rated 4.7/5, £17.55 standard ticket
- Hovercraft Museum, Lee-on-the-Solent, rated 4.7/5, £8 standard ticket
- Hythe Pier Railway and Ferry, New Forest, rated 4.5/5, £2 train, but ferry is not running
- SeaCity Museum, Southampton, rated 4.4/5, £14 standard ticket
- Solent Sky Aviation Museum, Southampton, rated 4.7/5, £12 standard ticket

Wildlife

- Bolderwood Deer Sanctuary, New Forest, rated 4.6/5, £3 requested donation
- Dinosaur Isle, Sandown, rated 4.1/5, £8 standard ticket
- Liberty's Owl, Raptor and Reptile Centre, New Forest, rated 4.7/5, £14.95
- Manor Farm, Solent, rated 4.5/5, £11 standard ticket
- Marwell Zoo, Solent, rated 4.4/5, £19 standard ticket
- New Forest Wildlife Park, rated 4.5/5, £15.95 standard ticket
- Staunton Farm, Havant, rated 4.7/5, £10 standard ticket, entry to the park is free
- Tapnell Farm Park, Isle of Wight, rated 4.7/5, £16 standard ticket
- West Wight Alpacas and Llamas, rated 4.7/5, £10.50 standard ticket

Other Attractions

- Godshill Model Village, Isle of Wight, rated 4.7/5, £8.50 standard ticket
- Little Woodham 17th Century Village, Gosport, rated 4.7/5, £7 standard ticket
- Southampton Art Gallery, rated 4.5/5, free entry
- Southsea Model Village, rated 4.4/5, £7 standard ticket
- Spinnaker Tower, Portsmouth, rated 4.6/5, £18 standard ticket

Solent Walking and Cycling Routes

Here are links to some walks you can follow through the Solent's cities and countryside. There are many other walking routes in the Solent region. You are recommended to obtain 1:25000 Ordnance Survey Explorer maps covering areas of interest so you can find and follow your own routes. These maps are invaluable when walking in rural areas. You need map OL3 for Portsmouth, Fareham and the Meon Valley, OL22 for the New Forest and Southampton, OL29 for the Isle of Wight, and OL32 for Winchester and the nearby South Downs. For self-guided tours in urban areas you may find the Go Jauntly and GPSMYCITY apps and web sites helpful.

Ordnance Survey Go Jauntly GPSMYCITY

Isle of Wight Walks

Bembridge Windmill Walk, 5.5 miles, circular walk around Bembridge and Culver Down
Brading Marsh Walk, 3 miles, circular walk around Brading Station
Brighstone Village Walk, 2.5 miles, two circular walks around Brighstone
Carisbrooke Castle & Cemetery Walk, 5 miles, circuit from Newport to Carisbrooke and back
Cowes Rope Walk, 5 miles, exploring both East and West Cowes
Freshwater Way, 5 miles, from Yarmouth to Compton Bay or Freshwater Bay
Medina Estuary Walk, 9 miles, from Newport to Cowes along both sides of the river
Milne Trail, 3 miles, circular walk around Newport and Shide
Newport Mill Trail, 8 miles, circular walk from Newport to Blackwater, Gatcombe and back
Newport Town Walk, 2 miles, circular walk around Newport and its pubs
Newtown Nature Reserve, 3.5 miles, circular walk around Newtown village and estuary
St Catherines Walk, 3.5 miles, circular walk around Niton and St Catherines Lighthouse
Tennyson Trail, 14 miles, hill-top walk from Alum Bay to Newport
Three Forts Walk, 5.5 miles, circular walk from Yarmouth via Old Freshwater
West Cowes Walk, 2 miles, exploring West Cowes and its pubs

New Forest Walks

Bucklers Hard Walk, 5 miles, from Beaulieu to Buckler's Hard and back
Calshot Walk, 3 miles, from Fawley Town Square to Calshot bus stop
Hurst Castle Walk, 3 miles, from Keyhaven to Hurst Castle and back
Keyhaven-Pennington Walk, 2.5 to 4.5 miles, from Keyhaven around Pennington marshes
Lyndhurst Walks, from 2 to 10 miles, a dozen walks around Lyndhurst
More New Forest Walks, from 2 miles, forty walks around the New Forest

Portsmouth Walks

Farlington Marshes Walk, 3 miles, circular walk around marshes from the car park
Hilsea Lines Walk, 2 miles, from Hilsea Lido along the lines and back
Langstone Harbour Walk, 14 miles, way-marked circular route around the Harbour
Millennium Promenade, 2.5 miles, linear walk along Portsmouth Waterfront
Nelson Trail, 1 mile, linear walk through Old Portsmouth to the Waterfront
Old Portsmouth Walk, 1.5 miles, circular walk around Spice Island and Old Portsmouth

Southampton Walks

Jane Austen Trail, 1 mile, around Southampton Old Town from the Bargate
Heritage, Titanic and Waterfront Walk, 3 miles, from Ocean Village to the Bargate
Old Town Trail, 1.5 miles, from the Bargate to Holyrood Church
Old Town Walls Walk (part I), from Chessel Bay to the Forty Steps
Old Town Walls Walk (part II), 0.5 miles, from Gods House Tower to Blue Anchor Lane
Parks to Port Walk, 1 mile, from the Art Gallery to Gods House Tower
Self-Guided Walk round the Common, 4 miles, circular walk from Avenue Campus
Recommended City Walks, four walks chosen by University students
Test Valley Trails, 5 miles, circular walk from Testwood Lakes Centre
Titanic Trail, 3 miles, from the Civic Centre to Bugle Street

Walking the Rest of the Solent

Hamble River Walk, 2 miles, from Warsash to Universal Marina
St Catherines Hill Walk, 1 mile, circular walk from the car park & Handlebar café
Titchfield Canal Walk, 5 miles, circular walk from Titchfield village car park
Winchester City Walking Trails, 3 walks around the city centre, each about 1 mile
Winchester Water Meadow Walk, 4 miles, from the City Mill to the Cathedral

Long Distance Routes

Clarendon Way, 26 miles, from Winchester to Salisbury
Isle of Wight Coast Path, 70 miles, circular walk around the island
Itchen Way, 32 miles, from Cheriton village to Woolston, Southampton (St James Way / Camino)
Pilgrims Way, 119 miles, from Winchester to Canterbury
Pilgrims Trail, 29 miles, from Winchester to Portsmouth (continues in France)
St Swithuns Way, 34 miles, from Winchester to Farnham
Solent Way, 60 miles, from Milford-on-Sea to Emsworth, on Chichester Harbour (coast path)
South Downs Way, 100 miles, from Winchester to Eastbourne
Test Way, 44 miles, from Inkpen Hill to Eling, Totton

Cycle Routes

Isle of Wight Cycle map, showing 8 cycle ways and the Round the Island route
New Forest Cycling, a dozen routes, and a map showing approved routes through the Forest
Old Railway Cycle Route, 9 miles, from Brockenhurst Railway Station to Burley village
Portsea Island Cycle, 14 miles, circular route around Portsea Island on quiet roads
Red Squirrel Trail, 4.5 miles Cowes to Newport, 8 miles Newport to Sandown
Rhinefield Ornamental Woodland, 11 miles, Brockenhurst Railway Station to Burley village

National Cycle routes 2, 22, 23, 222, 224, and 236 all pass through the region. Sustrans defines these routes and their web site provides information and maps. Both Portsmouth and Southampton have also published maps of local routes which are more pleasant and safer for cycling than the regular roads around these cities.

Sustrans Southampton Cycle Routes Portsmouth Cycle Route

Story of the Solent: Geography and Early History

The Solent was formed at the end of the ice age around eight thousand years ago. It is believed that there was a river valley here; local rivers such as the Test, Itchen and Hamble flowed into the Solent river and onward to the English Channel. Another theory is that the valley was originally a lagoon. Either way, the low lying land of the Solent flooded as the sea level rose, and south eastern England sank. Many river estuaries were also submerged, creating "rias" or drowned valleys such as Southampton Water and Portsmouth Harbour on the mainland, and Newtown Harbour and Bembridge Harbour on the Isle of Wight. The chalk ridge and cliffs along the south of the island were previously connected to the mainland at Old Harry Rocks to the south of Swanage but are now separated by the Solent.

Pre-historic remains show that the area has been inhabited for tens of thousands of years, although early people did not necessarily live in large towns. A settlement on Hengistbury Head, south of Christchurch, is around 14,000 year old, with a significant number of bladed stone artefacts. Another stone age village has been found off the Isle of Wight's Bouldnor cliffs, dating from around 8,000 years ago. It appears that log boats were constructed there, possibly for trade. As the Solent expanded, this village disappeared underwater. The most famous pre-historic site in the area, Stonehenge, is just outside the Solent region. A pre-booked bus from Salisbury station takes around 50 minutes to reach this stone age monument, which was constructed between 5,000 and 3,500 years ago. A line of wooden stakes has been found at Quarr on the Isle of Wight, most likely a fish trap, around 3,000 years old. Iron age sites in the Solent Region include St Catherine's Hill near Winchester. This hilltop has the remains of an iron age hillfort, with a single easily visible rampart.

The Romans conquered Britain (which they called Britannia) starting in AD 43, and reaching the Solent within 4 years. At this time, the region was inhabited by Celtic tribes who spoke a language similar to today's Welsh or Gaellic. The exile of Verica, king of the Atrebates tribe from Silchester, provided an excuse for the Roman invasion. The Britons were co-opted into the Roman way of life for the next 400 years. The Romans established rural villas and fortified cities, including Winchester and Salisbury. The remains of a Roman fort can be seen at Portchester, and Roman villas can be visited at Brading and Newport on the Isle of Wight. The villa at Fishbourne is rather larger and may have been a palace built for Cogidubnus, heir to Verica, who was allied with the Romans. Roman roads connected their major inland centres to ports on the coast such as Southampton, Portchester, and Bosham.

Eventually, however, the rule of Rome was threatened by attacks by Germanic tribes from the north. The Romans responded by withdrawing their troops from Britain in around 410, leaving the remaining Romano-British people to fend for themselves. Soon after this, the Angle, Saxon and Jute Germanic tribes came to settle in England. The West Saxon kingdom of Wessex was established by around 519. From time to time Wessex fought against Mercia, the Anglo-Saxon kingdom to the north. Ine was King of Wessex from 689 to 726; during his reign trade grew, particularly in Hamwic (Anglo-Saxon Southampton), where coins were minted. Vikings began to raid England in 783 and continued attacks for the next 300 years. In 865 a great Viking army

invaded England. By 878, only Wessex remained unconquered, and Alfred had been forced to retreat to the Somerset Levels. From here he was able to rally his troops and defeat the Vikings at the Battle of Edington. Alfred established a network of 33 defended towns called burhs connected by roads called herepaths, a mobile field army, and a small navy. He was responsible for re-building London, previously a major Mercian port, after its Viking occupation. He also promoted education in (old) English. Alfred called himself King of the Anglo-Saxons. His daughter, Ethelflaed, fought against the Vikings in the north of England. His grandson, Athelstan, conquered the last Viking kingdom, York, and became the first King of England in 927. Despite this, Vikings raids and invasions continued. Cnut the Great was accepted as King by the Saxon Witan (council) in Southampton in 1016, and ruled until 1035. Saxon rule was restored in 1042. In 1066, however, England was conquered by the Normans under William I, also known as William the Conqueror. William's wife Matilda descended from Alfred's daughter, Elfrida of Flanders, so Alfred is an ancestor of all later monarchs.

There are a few Saxon remains in the region. Excavated remains of Winchester's Nunnaminster Abbey can be seen in Abbey Passage between the Guildhall and Abbey Gardens. Wareham's earthen town ramparts are Saxon. Carisbrooke Castle on the Isle of Wight includes half buried remains of the walls of a Saxon burh. Archaeological finds from St Mary's, the site of Hamwic, can be seen in Southampton's city museum.

To consolidate their rule, the Normans quickly built up castles across England and Wales, perhaps as many as 750. A ditch and wooden fence was used to protect the bailey area where soldiers lived, and a wooden keep was constructed on top of a mound called the motte. William was also keen to continue collecting taxes. This led to the Domesday Book, which records significant estates and their economic activity. Saxon manors continued, but typically with a new Norman lord. In the Norman feudal system, all land was owned by the King, who granted his loyal followers land in return for them supplying goods, taxes, and troops as and when required. The Domesday book provides a different perspective compared to modern times: manors, farms and agriculture dominate. There are over 100 entries for the Isle of Wight, but no mention of Newport or Ryde, neither of which existed at that time. On Portsea Island, Buckland, Copnor and Fratton are mentioned. The population of Portsmouth appears to have been two or three hundred. Portchester and two neighbouring manors were given by William to one of his Norman supporters. Hamtune (Southampton) is mentioned, together with Millbrook, Shirley, and South Stoneham. The population of Southampton may have been around seven hundred.

The Norman kings and barons continued to have titles and land in Normandy, and spoke (Norman) French. They regularly crossed the sea between England and France. Many of them had houses in Southampton, which was a popular departure port. William's grandson William Adelin, was Henry I's only son and heir to the throne. In 1120, he was returning from Barfleur in France to meet Henry in Southampton when the White Ship he was travelling on struck a rock and sunk with only one survivor. After Henry I's death in 1135 there was a succession crisis between his daughter Matilda (known as Empress Maud) and his nephew Stephen.

During the fighting Winchester was set on fire by its own bishop, Henry, Stephen's brother. The anarchy continued until 1154 when Stephen died and the throne passed to Matilda's son Henry II. To consolidate his reign, Henry II restored national government. Some castles were re-built in stone, including the keep at Portchester and Southampton's castle. But the portcullis and gates of Bishop Henry's castle, Wolvesey, were removed. Records show that both Henry II and his wife Eleanor of Acquitaine travelled through Southampton on their way to and from their extensive territories in France. Southampton's merchants prospered, exporting wool to Flanders and France, and importing wine from Bordeaux and Gascony, which they stored in their stone vaults underneath the old town.

The Normans also built cathedrals including Winchester, Chichester, Salisbury, and the abbeys at Romsey, Southwick, Hyde, Quarr, Mottisfont, Beaulieu, Titchfield, and Netley. Some of these replaced earlier Saxon buildings, but the oldest parts which now remain are Norman. Religious establishments gradually acquired property through gifts and bequests. In 1204–5, tax records show Southampton to be the third richest port in England. At that time it was importing wine and exporting wool and by 1320 was one of the staple ports with a local monopoly on this export trade. By the 1300s, a large proportion and the best quality of wool came from Cistercian estates and Abbeys such as Beaulieu. Friaries and hospices were also built inside the settlements such as Southampton, Portsmouth, and Winchester, with St Cross just outside this city.

During the First Baron's War the rebels rose up against King John, who was refusing to accept the Magna Carta, and allied with the King of France. In 1216, his son, Louis, invaded England and captured London, Winchester, and Portchester Castle. Later that year, however, John died and the rebel barons switched loyalty to his nine year old son, Henry III, whose regent re-issued Magna Carta. In 1217 Louis was forced to return to France.

Another reason for John's unpopularity was the cost of fighting to defend Normandy, which nonetheless the French had conquered during his reign. In 1259, following further defeats in France, Henry III signed the Treaty of Paris, acknowledging French control of Normandy.

In 1328, however, when the King of France died, Edward III was his nearest male relative, and claimed the throne. Instead, the French barons elected a native French cousin, Philip. Disagreements between Edward and Philip led to the French taking Gascony which had still been under English control. This led to the 100 years war, which lasted from 1337 to 1453. This war was interrupted by truces, treaties and the Black Death.

The Solent played a major role in this conflict. Recognising the importance of the Solent, the French sent raiding parties to Portsmouth, Southampton and the Isle of Wight. In May 1338 a fleet of small ships arrived in Portsmouth flying English flags. At this time the town was unwalled and undefended, so the raiders were able to loot the town's ships and supplies before burning down the houses, stores and docks. In October 1338 a fleet of around 50 ships arrived in Southampton. At this time the town walls did not protect from attacks by sea, so the French and Genoese raiders were able to land at or near the West Gate, break into the rich merchant houses and cellars,

carrying off their valuable property, then set the town on fire. The town's Common Seal, Customs Seal, and weigh-beam were lost. Around 150 barrels of wine and all the sacks of wool owing to the king were also lost. Following this disaster, Southampton's town walls were extended around the whole town, which remained secure thereafter. Portsmouth however was sacked again in 1369, 1377 and 1380. In 1377 the French also landed on the Isle of Wight, burning settlements including Newport, Newtown and Yarmouth. Defenders retreated to Carisbrooke Castle. After their commander was shot the invaders retreated and sailed off.

The Solent is easily reached from London and Winchester. The royal castles of Portchester and Southampton were only 14 miles apart, a short ride by horse. A large fleet could be assembled over a period of weeks or months in the protection of Southampton Water, the Hamble Estuary, and Portsmouth Harbour. Ships could be supplied, and armies assembled and boarded together with their armour, weapons, and horses. The west and south of France are reached more easily from here than most other ports. In 1346 Edward III sailed from Portchester with a fleet of over 700 ships and up to 10,000 troops prior to his victory at Crecy, and subsequent capture of Calais. In 1415, before Agincourt, Henry V also stayed at Portchester before sailing with a fleet of perhaps 700 ships, 12,000 soldiers and 20,000 horses. Some claim the royal fleet review tradition dates from this event.

In 1431 Henry VI was crowned king of France at Notre Dame in Paris, although this coronation was recognised by the French, who had crowned Charles VII at Reims Cathedral in 1429. Charles was able to reorganise his army and fight back, re-taking Rouen in 1449, and the whole of Normandy a year later. In 1453 the French captured Bordeaux. England had lost all her French possessions with the exception of Calais, which remained in English hands until 1558.

Further Reading

The Solent	Solent Underwater Archaeology	Hengistbury Head
Bouldnor Cliff	Fishbourne	Cogidubnus
Ine of Wessex	Alfred the Great	King Alfred
English Monarchs	Nunnaminster	Motte and Bailey Castles
Wight Domesday	Domesday Survey	Rout of Winchester
First Baron's War	100 years war	Channel Campaign
Southampton Raid	Portsmouth Raids	Crecy Campaign
Battle of Agincourt	Miraculous Agincourt	Agincourt Fleet

From the 100 Years War to the 1700s

After the Norman conquest, the first King to speak (middle) English as their first language was probably Henry IV, born in 1367. The Chancery Standard was increasingly used for official documents starting in the 1430s, and early modern English was popularised by printed works such as the English Bible and Prayer Book in the 1500s. Modern English includes vocabulary derived from Anglo-Saxon, French, Latin, and Old Norse, and a simplified grammar which benefits non-native speakers. The English language is a significant legacy of the invasions of Britain by the Romans, Anglo-Saxons, Vikings, and Normans.

Traders from Genoa had arrived in Southampton as early as 1303 and from Venice in 1319. Their galleys and carracks from and shipped wool back to weaving centres in places such as Florence. The 100 years war disrupted trade with Italy, until a 1378 Act of Parliament provided special privileges to trade with Southampton. Some Italian agents stayed all year to establish their own trading networks. A few obtained permission to settle, and started families. The Italian wool trade continued on and off for over 200 years, with the last few Venetian ships arriving in 1569. The loss of this trade was partly compensated by a monopoly on the import of sweet wine from the Mediterranean granted by Mary in 1554 and confirmed by Elizabeth I in 1563, but Southampton's trade and prosperity still declined.

In 1445, Henry VI married Margaret of Anjou. It was hoped their union would secure peace between England and France. She was intended to arrive in Portchester but bad weather forced her to land in Portsmouth instead. They married in Titchfield Abbey before travelling to London where she was crowned Queen of England. The hoped for treaty with France did not materialise, however. Instead Margaret featured in the Wars of the Roses.

The Plantagenet dynasty which began by Henry II came to an end with a dynastic civil war between two branches of this royal house. The Wars of the Roses lasted from 1455 to 1487, and ended when Henry VII began the Tudor dynasty. The 100 Years War had showed up weaknesses in the defences of Portsmouth and Southampton. The walls of Southampton were extended to encircle the town completely by the end of the 1300s, and in 1400 the gun fort Gods House Tower was built with cannon commanding the approach to the town's quays. Portsmouth's Round Tower was first built in wood, in 1418. In the 1490s it was rebuilt in stone, and the Square Tower was added to the fortifications. Henry VII also built Portsmouth's (and possibly the world's) first dry dock in 1495.

In 1534 Henry VIII was made the supreme head of the church in England. Between 1536 and 1541 he dissolved the Catholic monasteries and seized their property and income. Mottisfont, Beaulieu, Netley, Southwick and Titchfield were bought from the crown, and converted to private houses. Quarr Abbey was bought by a Southampton merchant and the stones sold for re-use, for example in Yarmouth Castle. Abbeys in local towns and cities were also largely demolished, although Hyde Abbey gateway survives, and the church and almshouses of Gods House Hospital in Southampton, although these were rebuilt in Victoria times. St Cross in Winchester survived and continued to serve as an almshouse and hospice.

The money raised by the dissolution helped to fund the construction of Henry's device forts. These were built along the south coast to strengthen defences against an attack from France, which had remained Catholic. Over a quarter were alongside or near the Solent. These forts were designed to support artillery and fire against attackers before they could land, rather than hold large numbers of defenders who could fight them after they landed. Four of them still exist as fortifications, typically extended during later conflicts, three have been converted to houses, and five no longer exist, perhaps as a result of coastal erosion.

Henry's defences were needed in 1545 when the French sent over 200 ships carrying 30,000 soldiers to invade. They arrived in the Solent, landed on the Isle of Wight, and threatened Portsmouth. Henry himself watched the naval battle from his newly completed fort, Southsea Castle. The English fleet sailed out of Portsmouth and the two sides engaged at long range. It is during this engagement that the Mary Rose sank, for reasons which are unclear: perhaps she was top-heavy after her latest refit, perhaps she keeled over in a gust of wind and took on water through open gunports, or perhaps she was damaged French cannon fire. The French troops who had landed on the Isle of Wight were repelled by local militia, with fighting at Bonchurch, Sandown, and Bembridge. The French then decided to retreat as they had not established any beachhead to support their invasion. This battle showed forward defence to be an effective strategy. Cannons, a strong navy and coastal forts could secure the country, with local defence forces organised to repel marauders.

It was in 1558 during the reign of Mary that the French took Calais, the last remaining English possession in France, important for trade with the Low Countries. Under Elizabeth I England was threatened by the Spanish Armada in 1588 when 141 ships carried 10,138 sailors and 19,315 soldiers from Lisbon, then part of Spain, toward England. The Armada was ordered to take Southampton or the Isle of Wight. A further 30,000 soldiers waited in Spanish Netherlands to join the invasion. An English fleet with around 226 smaller ships was assembled in Plymouth. The two navies fought actions off Plymouth, then Portland, and the Isle of Wight, where a full-scale attack forced the Armada away from the Solent back to open sea. The Armada then sailed on to Calais, where they formed a defensive crescent formation. English fireships forced the Armada to scatter, and they were then attacked by English cannon fire off Gravelines. Although the Spanish had more cannons, they could not fire them as effectively, relying instead on sailing close and boarding their enemies' ships. The English however kept their distance to frustrate this tactic. Although only five Spanish ships were sunk, many others were severely damaged. After this battle off Gravelines, the wind starting blowing from the south. The remains of the Armada sailed north, pursued by the English fleet into Scottish waters. The Armada then sailed on, heading south intending to sail past Ireland and on to Spain. Strong storms drove many of the remaining ships onto rocks, however, and perhaps half the Armada's ships were lost or damaged beyond repair, and around half the sailors and soldiers who sailed on them. Historic maps showing the battle against the Spanish Armada were saved for the nation and displayed at Portsmouth Historic Dockyard in 2023. This battle also confirmed the benefits of a strong navy, notwithstanding the failure of the English

Armada a year later. The importance of inland castles such as Carisbrooke was diminished. Southampton castle was sold by James I in 1618 and Portchester Castle by Charles I in 1632.

Despite the efforts of Elizabeth I and James I to ensure acceptance of the Church of England, religious conflict broke out under Charles II, who was unwilling to accept joint government with Parliament. During the civil war, the south-west mostly favoured the monarch, whereas the south-east supported Parliament. Inevitably, the Solent region was involved in some skirmishes and battles. Portsmouth was held by its governor, Goring, for the King, but surrendered in 1642 after being bombarded from Gosport and Southsea Castle, when he threatened to blow up the town's gunpowder store. Later that year, Southampton was occupied by Parliamentary forces. Winchester was surrendered by Royalists, then retaken in 1643. The Battle of Cheriton, east of Winchester, was won by Parliamentary forces in 1644. Winchester was then captured and sacked, although Royalists continued to hold the Castle until 1645. Charles surrendered in 1646 and was imprisoned in various locations, including Carisbrooke Castle in 1647/8. Parliament attempted to negotiate a settlement until, after failing to reach an agreement, he was executed in 1649. When the civil war was over, Parliament slighted many castles by destroying or damaging them to prevent any future military use, including Winchester and Corfe. The 4th of Earl of Southampton had represented Charles I in negotiations with Parliament, and was appointed Lord High Treasurer by Charles II after the monarchy was restored in 1660.

The Act of Uniformity 1662 required priests to conform to the Church of England Book of Common Prayer, the first version of which had been introduced under Edward VI in 1549. Priests who refused to conform were ejected from the Church, losing their livelihood and, in many cases, their homes. The Act of Toleration 1688/9 restored freedom of worship for non-conformists, although not Roman Catholics, who had to wait for the Roman Catholic Relief Act of 1791. Protestants had been arriving in England since the mid 1500s, Walloons from the Spanish Netherlands fleeing the inquisition, and Huguenots from France after the St Bartholemew's Day Massacre. St Julien's Church in Southampton was made available to them for their worship, and they presented a petition of thanks to Elizabeth I on 1591. The separatist Pilgrim Fathers set sail via Southampton in the Mayflower and Speedwell in 1620. The 1598 Edict of Nantes in France granted protestants rights and encouraged tolerance, but this was revoked in 1685 by Louis XIV. It is estimated that over 800,000 Huguenots left over France the next 20 years and sought refuge in northern Europe and America. Many took their craft-working skills and business acumen with them. In Southampton, for example, the early Walloon refugees introduce manufacture of Hamtun serge, and employed many wool-combers and weavers. Cloth became a more valuable export than raw wool. Protestant immigrants had contacts on the mainland and were able to continue trading overseas, with some joining the top ranks of Southampton merchants. Later Huguenots began making paper at Gater's Mill on the Itchen. Henri Portal, who arrived in Southampton in 1702, then set up a firm which won the contract to make Bank of England notes in 1718 and his family continued to own the business until bought out in 1995. Many of these stricter protestants helped to establish non-conformist churches such as Southampton's Above Bar Chapel (1689) and Portsmouth's High Street Chapel (1718).

After the loss of English territories in France, and the religious wars on the continent and in England, trade with France, Spain, and Italy reduced, and likewise the wealth of Southampton and its merchants. The discovery of America and a sea route to the Far East led to new business opportunities abroad. The most significant trade connections however were with ports further east, such as Poole, Dartmouth, Bristol and Liverpool. Nonetheless, in 1654 Admiral Penn set sail for America from Portsmouth, with 38 ships, four smaller craft, and 3,000 soldiers. His Quaker son William Penn founded Pennsylvania and its capital Philadelphia. William sailed aboard the Canterbury to Pennsylvania from Cowes in 1699 with his second wife Hannah, who later administered this colony for 14 years. Charles II married Catherine of Braganza in Domus Dei in 1662, and gave his French mistress the title Duchess of Portsmouth in 1673. Shipyards operated along the Solent, particularly during times of war, from Buckler's Hard in the New Forest, Redbridge, Chapel and Northam in Southampton, Bursledon on the Hamble River, and the Portsmouth Naval Dockyards.

Further Reading

The Victoria County History (VCH) project began under Queen Victoria and continues to this day. Volume I of Hampshire's history was the first to be published, in 1900. Volume 3, including Portchester, Portsmouth and Southampton can be found on-line in Hampshire Volume 3. Part of volume 5, covering Winchester and the Isle of Wight is also on-line. These are detailed accounts, although the language, and some of the information, may be out-dated. Some more recent findings and investigations have been published by the Hampshire Field Club and Archaeology, who are contributing to the on-going Victoria County History project. Links to relevant sources are listed below:

Cistercian Sheep and Wool	VCH Volume 3	VCH Volume 5
Wars of the Roses	Portsmouth fortifications	Southampton town walls
Monastery dissolution	Device forts Device fort list	Battle of the Solent
Spanish Armada	Civil War	Battle of Cheriton
Charles I at Carisbrooke	Act of Uniformity	Act of Toleration
Southampton Huguenots	Mayflower Pilgrims	Papermaking
Isaac Watts	Portsmouth High Street Chapel	Carter family
William Penn	Hannah Penn	Canterbury

Transport Networks

The Romans, Saxons, and Normans were all attracted by the Solent's maritime links. Travelling by sea was often quicker than walking or riding a horse. Southampton is just 14 miles from Winchester, the capital city of Saxon Wessex, which was also an important base for early Norman kings and queens. Winchester was certainly on the main network of Roman roads, though it is still unclear whether there was a direct route to London. Up to the 100 years war with France, nobles, armies, and trade goods such as wine and wool travelled to and from the continent via Solent ports including Portchester, Southampton and Portsmouth. Both England and the United Kingdom were frequently at war, and Portsmouth was developed as a royal navy base to defend the nation and also to transport soldiers for campaigns abroad. It was also involved in exploration and the establishment of some overseas colonies. During the industrial revolution networks of canals provided more efficient inland transportation. Hampshire was not a major manufacturing centre, but canals were built from Winchester to Southampton (1710), Andover to Redbridge (1794), Salisbury to Southampton (1802), and Portsmouth to Arundel (1823). None of these was particularly profitable, though the Itchen Navigation between Southampton and Winchester stayed open for about 150 years. All these canals were abandoned during by the mid 1800s.

In 1740 Admiral Anson sailed from Portsmouth to disrupt Spain in the Pacific Ocean, returning four years later with significant treasure, paraded through the streets of London to great acclaim. In 1746 Admiral Byng sailed from Portsmouth to defend Menorca, then a British possession, from French attack. His fleet was in poor repair, with some ships missing, and undermanned. The mission was a failure and Byng was blamed. He was court martialled in Portsmouth during 1756. Attempts to secure a royal pardon failed, and he was executed in the Solent the next year by a squad of marines on HMS Monarch. In 1774 the navy was ordered to sail for Boston where the American revolution had started. In 1775 Captain Cook landed in Portsmouth following his second expedition round the world. At the start of 1805 the East India Company's Earl of Abergavenney set sail for India. She ran aground off Portland and sank, killing 253 passengers and crew, including the captain, John Wordsworth, the poet's brother. Later in 1805 HMS Victory returned to Portsmouth with Nelson's body after his victory at the Battle of Trafalgar off Spain. Following the American Revolution, Portsmouth housed prison ships until 1857. Convicts were also transported to Australia between 1787 and 1868. During this period, Portsmouth docks expanded repeatedly, with significant building programmes starting in 1665, 1691, 1761, 1780, 1796, 1828, and 1843.

Following the restoration, the monarch, then Charles II, was officially appointed as head of army. Nonetheless, after the devastation of the English Civil War, the idea of a standing army was unpopular. Whereas sailors could stay on their ships while in port, army troops were housed on an ad hoc basis in army camps, or billeted in taverns and hotels, which was not necessarily popular. Regular large encampments of soldiers, for example on Southsea Common during 1770, 1778, 1779, were also problematic, and by the late 1700s troops started to be housed in barracks, for example in Winchester (1794), Southampton (1794), and Newport on the Isle of Wight (1798). An early example, possibly the first in England, was Colewort in Portsmouth. In 1694 the Garrison Hospital building was turned into troop housing, and these barracks were extended in 1718, 1827 and 1834, but then demolished in the 1920s. Winchester's Peninsula Barracks now house 6

military museums, while the former Parkhurst / Albany Barracks on the Isle of Wight are now the site of a prison.

During the 1700s turnpike trusts were set up on major routes to manage traffic and improve the roads. Stage coach travel made travel to neighbouring counties and London more convenient. In 1711, a turnpike road opened between Petersfield and Portsmouth. Between 1753 and 1765 turnpike acts also established routes from Southampton to neighbouring towns, cities and London. Landed gentry could buy land outside towns such Portsmouth and Southampton to build country estates. An early example is South Stoneham House in Southampton, built in 1708 for Edmund Dummer, surveyor of the royal navy responsible for developing new docks at Portsmouth. The grade II listed Great Saltern Mansion is a late Georgian property on Portsmouth's Eastern Road, currently a pub. Sea bathing establishments and assembly rooms attracted wealthy and prestigious visitors. Southampton's Dolphin Hotel was developed in the mid 1700s to provide suitable accommodation for visitors to the spa, built around a mineral water spring discovered in 1740. Sea bathing also promoted health benefits and in 1761 Long Rooms were added to attract rich visitors to Martin's Baths and the spa. Southsea became a place "where the elite and beauty of the neighbourhood congregated, listened to the band, bathed, danced, talked scandal and fashion, and read the newspapers" and Clarence Esplanade was built using convict labour. Portsmouth's Portland Hotel opened in 1847. Pump rooms and baths were built nearby Clarence Pier, which opened in 1861.

During the 1800s steam power increased the speed and convenience of travel on land and by sea. The first steam packet ferry services to the Isle of Wight started in the 1820s, followed by cross channel services. To support increased passenger numbers following the end of the Napoleonic wars, piers opened in Ryde (1814), Southampton (1833), and Portsmouth (1842). In 1823 the Admiralty took responsibility from the Post Office Packet Service for overseas mail and began contracting deliveries to private companies. In 1831 a prospectus was issued for a company to develop steamship docks in Southampton connected by railway to London. The railway reached Southampton in 1840, and in the same year Peninsular & Oriental and the Royal Mail Steam Packet companies won Admiralty mail contracts for delivering mail to the Iberia peninsular, Africa, and the West Indies. Southampton's newly constructed eastern docks opened in 1842. Further expansion of the docks took place in the 1850s, 1890, 1930s, and 1968. In 1865 the luxurious Imperial Hotel, later known as the South Western Hotel, was built next to the station and docks to serve first class passengers. Scheduled services operated from Southampton to the Caribbean and South America (Royal Mail Steam Packet Company), Iberia, Egypt, India, China, and Australia (P&O), and South America (Union-Star). In 1907 White Star moved their express New York service from Liverpool to Southampton, taking advantage of faster train connections to London, and the opportunity to pick up extra passengers in Cherbourg. White Star's Titanic famously sailed from Southampton on its tragic maiden voyage in 1912. Over 540 people from Southampton, mainly crew, died when she struck an iceberg and sank. In 1919 Cunard also moved their New York service to Southampton from Liverpool. Southampton is currently the largest cruise port in the UK, with 5 cruise terminals and Carnival's UK headquarters, and the second largest container port. Portsmouth first railway connection to London via Eastleigh opened in 1841, and the direct route in 1859. In 1976

Portsmouth Council opened the International Ferry Port, which provides ferry services to France, Spain and the Channel Islands, as well as a number of smaller cruise ship sailings.

Steam-powered ferries connected Woolston with central Southampton in 1836 and began running between Gosport in Portsmouth in 1840. Woolston is now connected by a toll bridge, opened in 1977, and ferries still run every 15 minutes to Gosport, but these are no longer steam powered. There are three car ferries to the Isle of Wight, from Lymington, Southampton and Portsmouth. There are also three foot passenger services, from Southampton, Portsmouth, and Southsea. Roads have been improved in modern times with the east-west M27 opening in 1983 and the final stretch of the north-south M3 between Winchester and Southampton in 1995. The A3(M) to Portsmouth is now all dual carriageway, or better, since the Hindhead tunnel opened in 2011.

The A27 provides dual carriageway connection from Portsmouth to Chichester in the east and from Southampton to Bournemouth in the west. There are good bus networks around the Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton. Trains run from Southampton and Portsmouth to Bath, Brighton, Bristol, Gatwick Airport, London, and Winchester. Southampton's mainline continues beyond Bournemouth to Poole, Dorchester, and Weymouth. Traffic can be heavy in the New Forest, however, during the summer. Many local roads have bottlenecks because traffic must travel inland before it can head east or west, for example from Lymington, Hythe, Lee on Solent, and Gosport. Gosport station closed in 1953 and the railway line now supports a rapid transit bus to Fareham.

Many Solent firms were involved in the design and manufacture of early aircraft, including the prototype Moonbeam II in 1912. The most successful firm was Supermarine, whose sea plane S.6B won the Schneider trophy outright in 1931. As many as half a million spectators may have watched the final competition over the Solent. This plane, which could fly over 400 miles per hour, was a pre-cursor to their more famous World War II Spitfire. Between the wars small passenger planes provided connections to the Channel Islands and France. Larger flying boats were also developed. At their peak, flying boat services operated briefly from Southampton docks to Sydney (Imperial) and New York (Pan Am) in 1939. These flights came to an end during World War II, however. Following the war, land-based airports and modern jet planes overtook sea planes and flying boats. Of the many South Hampshire airfields which helped to defend the Solent during the war, only Southampton Airport currently operates commercial flights. The Solent Sky aviation museum tells the story of sea-planes, flying boats, the Schneider Trophy, and the Spitfire, and has 20 surviving examples of these historic planes on display.

The Solent is also strongly associated with hovercraft. Sea trials took place here in the Solent. The first commercial models were manufactured on the Isle of Wight. The Southsea to Ryde hovercraft service uses locally built models. The Hovercraft museum in Lee-on-Solent has many historic craft on display, including the last remaining SR.N4, the Princess Anne, which crossed the channel for 33 years, and was built by Saunders Roe in East Cowes.

Another museum of national importance can be found at Beaulieu in the New Forest. The second Baron Montagu was a pioneering motorist who introduced the Prince of Wales to motoring in the

1890s. The third Baron opened the Montagu Motor Museum, now the National Motor Museum, in 1952. Nearly 300 cars are currently on display.

After the War, the two Queens were converted back to ocean liners and provided a two ship per week express service between Southampton and New York. Queen Mary held the Blue Riband between 1939 and 1952, crossing the Atlantic with an an average speed of 31 knots. By the mid 1960s, however, jet travel had reduced the appeal and profitability of ocean travel, the two Queens were retired, and replaced in 1969 by the Queen Elizabeth 2, built for dual use as either an ocean liner or a cruise ship. In 1974 P&O acquired Princess Cruises and in 1977 they span off its own cruise activities, running ships from Southampton and Sydney. In 1982 the QE2 and P&O's Canberra were requisitioned as troopships during the Falklands war, and SS Uganda as a hospital ship. Cunard was acquired by Carnival in 1998 and P&O Princess in 2003. Carnival is currently the largest cruise company in the world, with a dual listing in the UK and the USA, and UK headquarters in Southampton.

Further Reading

Roman Road	South Stoneham House	Great Salterns House
Trafalgar	Death of Nelson	English Army
Barracks	Colewort Barracks	Peninsula Barracks
Albany Barracks	Dolphin Hotel	Portsmouth 1800–1850
Portsmouth Stage Coaches	Southampton Stage Coaches	Clarence Pier
South Coast Piers	London and Southampton Railway	Portsmouth Direct Line
HMNB Portsmouth	Port of Southampton	Lost Titanic Generation
Portsmouth Port	Supermarine	Solent Sky
Hovercraft Museum	Beaulieu Motor Museum	Carnival House

Local Government and Civic Expansion

Ancient boroughs were recognised by royal charters. Winchester received one during the reign of Henry I, confirmed later by Henry II. Southampton's first charter was issued by Henry II in 1154/5 and Portsmouth's by Richard I. The Isle of Wight had no less than four towns with charters (Brading, Newport, Newtown, and Yarmouth). Later kings often issued new charters granting new privileges to the borough. Typically, the mayor was in charge, assisted by aldermen and other officials, who were responsible for collecting taxes and other dues, keeping order, organising defences, and supporting the monarch with funds and soldiers. From the 1400s, local government was recognised as a corporation. In 1447 Southampton became its own county, independent of Hampshire. It was responsible for collecting port taxes along the coast from Lymington to Portsmouth and Langstone, and on the Isle of Wight, an arrangement which may have started originally under King John.

After the English Civil War and the Glorious Revolution of 1688, the feudal links between ancient boroughs and the monarch had become outdated. Military power was recognised as a national responsibility rather than a local one. Borough meetings were poorly attended, except perhaps for annual feasts. Boroughs managed the elections for their members of parliament, and often favoured a single powerful family, such as the Carters in Portsmouth. With the industrial revolution, new towns developed without parliamentary representation. Following unrest, reform acts were passed in 1832, 1867, and 1884. The Isle of Wight was amalgamated into a single larger parliamentary constituency rather than returning six MPs (two each for Newport, Newtown, and Yarmouth).

To address local issues such as roads, lighting, and sewers, Improvement Commissioners were appointed. Southampton was provided with Paving Commissioners by an Act of Parliament in 1770. These continued until 1844/5 when they were given the broader remit of "improving the town" and "removing and preventing nuisances and annoyances therein" and renamed Improvement Commissioners. Winchester's Pavement Commissioners began operation in 1771 and continued until 1866. Their responsibilities included naming streets and numbering houses. These commissioners also organised watches to reduce crime and promote safer streets at night. During the 1800s, however, police forces were introduced, for example in 1832 in Winchester, and in 1836 in Southampton.

The Municipal Corporations Act of 1835 reformed town government with a standard approach to electing the town council. Those eligible to vote were recorded by the town clerk on a "burgess roll". The borough council was expected to collect rates to cover their expenses. Gradually, civic responsibilities were transferred to councils. The Public Health Act 1872 established urban sanitary districts and made councils responsible for public health and the provision of hospitals. Winchester's Royal Hampshire County Hospital was opened on its present location in 1868, Southampton General Hospital in 1900, and Portsmouth's Queen Alexandra Hospital in 1908. Hampshire County Council was created in 1889. Based in Winchester's historic castle site, additional buildings were constructed in 1895, 1912 and 1933. Newport's Guildhall was designed by John Nash and completed in 1819, although the Isle of Wight County Council now operates

from new buildings along the High Street opened in 1938 and extended in 1969. Winchester's Guildhall opened in 1873. Portsmouth's Town Hall was built in 1890. Badly damaged in World War II, it was rebuilt in the 1950s, and is now known as the Guildhall. Southampton's Civic Centre was built between 1932 and 1939. With its own cathedral, Winchester has been recognised as a city since the Norman conquest. Portsmouth was granted city status in 1926 and a year later its main parish church became its second cathedral. Southampton was granted city status in 1964. In 1995 the Isle of Wight was made a unitary authority, independent of Hampshire County Council. Since 1997 Portsmouth and Southampton have also been unitary authorities.

Urban populations grew significantly during the 1700s and 1800s. Portsmouth increased from 32,000 residents in 1801 to 188,000 in 1901, and Southampton from 19,000 in 1831 to 105,000 in 1901. Diseases such as cholera were rife in overcrowded areas with poor sanitation. A lazarette (quarantine ship) was established at Motherbank off Ryde between 1844 and 1897. Southampton's officials investigated causes of disease, and improved the water and sewage systems during the 1870s. In 1894, however, a report found that Simnel Street had over 440 people per acre compared to around 15 in the suburbs. Finally, these slums were cleared and new housing was built. Two of the original "municipal cottages" completed in 1902 can still be seen above the Undercroft. In 1912, the first council houses in Portsmouth were built on the former site of Whites Row. Winchester's Stanmore estate was developed from 1920, after World War I, and opened in 1923 by the Prince of Wales.

Portsmouth's New Royal Theatre was completed in 1900, and in 1907 the King's Theatre in Southsea. Southampton's Empire Theatre opened in 1928, and re-opened as the Mayflower Theatre in 1987. In 1978 Winchester's Theatre Royal opened on the site of a former hotel and cinema. The current Public Library in Winchester was built in 1931 and extended in 1966 and 1996. Southampton's current Central Library was opened in 1939, part of the new Civic Centre, and Portsmouth's opened in 1976. The University of Southampton was granted its royal charter in 1952. The University of Portsmouth was granted this status in 1992 and Solent University in 2005.

Further Reading

Ancient Borough	Municipal Borough	Rotten Boroughs
Commissioners	Paving Commissioners	Winchester Commissioners
County Councils	Hampshire County Council	Unitary Authorities
Newport Guildhall	Winchester Guildhall	Portsmouth Guildhall
Southampton Civic Centre	Motherbank Lazarette	Simnel Street Poverty
Southampton Secrets	Portsmouth Housing History	Winchester Council Estate
Winchester Public Library	Southampton Central Library	Portsmouth Central Library

Military History from 1700

At the start of the 1700s, it was proposed that each country's marine territory should be limited to the distance a cannon could fire, which was codified as the three mile limit. According to wikipedia, at this time cannons on board ships were only 1-3% accurate at a range of half a mile. Nonetheless this distance was sufficient to blockade or even bombard land-based targets from the sea. During the Seven Years War (1756–1763) the Royal Navy's superiority limited the ability of France to supply its overseas colonies. The 1759 victory at Quiberon Bay off France helped to prevent any invasion of Britain. Following this battle Admiral Hawke, previously Portsmouth Port Commander, commanded a naval blockade of France, weakening their economy. Victory in this war was responsible for a significant increase in Britain's presence in North America and India. Toward the end of his life, Hawke spent time in North Stoneham and is buried in its St Nicholas Church with a memorial commemorating the Quiberon Bay battle. During the Napoleonic Wars the British fleet attacked Copenhagen in 1801 and again in 1807 in order to rule out any possibility that Danish ships might assist France. In the first battle, Nelson famously ignored his admiral's signal to retreat by putting the telescope to his blind eye and said "I really do not see the signal". In the second battle, the Royal Navy fleet under the command of Admiral Gambier bombarded the city for 4 days before the Danish surrendered.

His previous victories ensured that Nelson was already a hero before the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805. He was on leave before he joined his fleet in Portsmouth. Crowds gathered outside the George Hotel in the High Street where he had breakfast, so he left by a back entrance. He then walked via Penny Street and Pembroke Street. Finally, he took a narrow tunnel near the King's Bastion through the Redoubt wall to the Sally Port where more crowds were waiting and cheering as he was rowed away to reach his flagship, HMS Victory. Though the George Hotel was destroyed in World War I, you can still follow most of his route today. Victory at the Battle of Trafalgar ensured that the Royal Navy were in control of the seas thereafter, helping to contain and finally defeat Napoleon. The well preserved HMS Victory is one of the top sights in the popular Portsmouth Historic Dockyard.

During the 1800s naval ship design and armaments continued to develop and improve. HMS Comet, a steam powered tug boat was completed in 1822, and the 1832 HMS Dee was the Royal Navy's first paddle steamer designed to carry significant armament. Wooden ships were found to be vulnerable to explosive shells adopted during the 1840s, and the 1860 HMS Warrior was one of the first two iron-clad warships built for the Royal Navy, and is also preserved at the Portsmouth Historic Dockyard. Torpedoes were developed during the 1860s, and the first Royal Navy steel-built ships was HMS Iris, completed in 1879. The Royal Navy first torpedo boat, TB.1, was built by John I Thornycroft at Chiswick, and completed in 1877. Regular orders were made for additional torpedo boats, which by the 1900s had increased to 160 foot in length. In 1904 Thornycroft moved to Woolston in Southampton where it was easier to build and launch larger vessels. In the run up to World War I, Thornycroft built 37 Royal Navy destroyers, a further 26 during the war itself, and a number of Coastal Motor Boats, used to defend harbours and coastal waters from submarines. J Samuel White of Cowes also built a number of torpedo boats and destroyers for the Royal Navy, starting in the late 1800s.

The HMS Dreadnought, built at Portsmouth Naval Dockyard, was launched in 1906. This was the first of new design for battleships, featuring a significant number of heavy-calibre guns, gun turrets, hardened steel armour, and steam turbine propulsion. It triggered a dreadnought arms race. Before the outbreak of World War II in 1914, Portsmouth had built 7 Royal Navy dreadnoughts out of a total of 21. In the 1916 Battle of Jutland, the British fleet had 28 dreadnoughts, based in Scapa Flow in Orkney, and the Germans had 16, based near Hamburg. Although the outcome of this battle was inconclusive, the Germans accepted that their surface ships had been contained, and reverted to submarine attacks until the end of the war. After World War I, the Washington Naval Treaty limited the number of larger battleships and aircraft carriers that its signatories, including Britain and Germany, could build.

Southampton was designated Military Embarkation Port number 1 during this War. The docks were taken over for this purpose and South Western Hotel was requisitioned as the headquarters. Up to 8 trains per hour brought troops and armaments to the docks, where ships waited to transport them across the channel. There were camps for troops on Southampton Common, and also sites nearby for example at Salisbury and Winchester. Most troops arrived and left within 24 hours. A plaque on Admiralty House next to dock gate 4 commemorates this contribution, and a relief at Swaythling station recalls the Remount Depot which supplied the army with horses. Local factories with a female workforce manufactured munitions such as high-explosive shells. By the end of the war over 7 million troops had passed through Southampton. More than 15 thousand vehicles, 800 thousand horses, and 13 thousand guns were also loaded or unloaded at the docks.

After the war there were many surplus ships and planes, reducing orders for new products. A number of manufacturers struggled during the 1920s and 30s. Cunard had to apply for a government loan in order to complete Queen Mary, then known as “hull number 534” at Brown’s shipyard on the Clyde. Queen Mary was launched in 1934 and her sister ship Queen Elizabeth in 1938. Both were converted for use as troopships during World War II, with their speed helping to avoid submarine attack. On one journey in 1943 the Queen Mary carried a total of 16,643 troops and crew, a record passenger total which still stands.

Vosper & Company was founded in Portsmouth 1871. They built small craft, ship’s boilers and engines, and also repaired ships. In 1936 they went public and moved to a new yard at Portchester. By this time Vospers were famous for their small and fast motor torpedo boats. MTB102 was completed in 1938, and at a speed of 48 knots was the fastest Royal Navy ship during World War 2. During the evacuation from Dunkirk she crossed the channel 8 times. Before the Normandy landings she took Winston Churchill and General Eisenhower to review the fleet. Vosper’s MTB71 can still be seen at the Explosion Museum of Naval Firepower in Gosport. Coastal Motorboat CMB331, built by Thornycroft and launched in 1941, is also on display. In 1966 Vospers merged with Thornycroft to form Vosper Thornycroft which is now a US owned subsidiary known as VTG.

Following their success in winning the Schneider trophy, Supermarine, worked on a design for a new fighter plane, the Spitfire. The Air Ministry's specification F7/30 specified a modern fighter with a flying speed over 250 miles per hour. With an elliptical wing, sunken rivets, and high-powered Rolls-Royce engines, the Spitfire was a good match, although the initial design was not rejected in 1934, and several updates were required. The first test flight took off from Southampton (then known as Eastleigh) Airport in 1936. Further changes increased the speed to 348 miles per hour, and 310 were ordered. To ensure a reliable supply of these planes, additional factories were set up around the country, and in particular at Castle Bromwich. The first production planes were ready by 1938. During the Battle of Britain the Supermarine factories in Woolston and Itchen ferry were targetted by German bombers, and on 26th September 1940 they were destroyed. Despite this, the Royal Air Force retained control of the air thanks to its Spitfire and Hurricane planes, and by the end of that year Germany had abandoned plans for a quick invasion. In the course of the war, a total of 631 people were killed by bombing in Southampton, and around 45,000 buildings heavily damaged or destroyed. Between 1938 and 1948 over 20,000 Spitfires were built.

Portsmouth was also heavily targetted and during the war German bombing killed around 930 people, and 20% of the city's houses were badly damaged or destroyed. The Portsmouth Bomb Map shows that the highest density occurred in the south and west of Portsea Island, in or near the naval dockyard, particularly at the start of 1941. Planning for the re-conquest of Europe began early and in 1942 underground headquarters were built 30 metres below Fort Southwick. By the time of D-Day, 700 staff were working there. Southwick House, a grade II listed Georgian manor, was the base for the Supreme Commander, General Eisenhower. Normandy was chosen as the best stretch of coast, despite lacking any deep sea port. Mulberry harbours were designed and constructed for temporary use until an existing port was captured. The initial landings were on five beaches, code-named Utah and Omaha where US forces landed, Sword and Gold where British forces landed, and Juno where Canadian forces landed. Various deceptions were carried out to convince the Germans that the landings would be further east. In the 7 weeks before D-Day, 9,500 trains were available to run on Southern Railway. Troop encampments such as on Southampton Common were concealed with camouflage netting. Troops begin embarkation in 31st May, the first ships set sail at 6am on 5th June from south coastports such as Plymouth, Portland, Southampton, and Portsmouth. The invasion fleet assembled south east of the Isle of Wight and started crossing the channel around midnight. Admiral Ramsay was in overall command of fleet movements. Over 195,000 naval personnel were involved and nearly 7,000 vessels, including 4,000 landing craft and 1,200 warships. Minesweepers led the fleet in order to clear safe channels to each beach, and only two ships were lost to mines. Over 2,200 planes bombed German coastal defences also starting around midnight. It was not until 5:10am that German torpedo boats spotted the fleet but were only able to sink one destroyer. Naval bombardment of the coastal defences began just before 6am and landings started at 6:30am at Utah and Omaha, and at 7:30am at the other three beaches. Around 130,000 ground troops landed, and more than 10,000 became casualties in the heavy fighting. Meanwhile around 25,000 troops and 670 gliders had flown from just before midnight on the 5th to land at night behind the coastal defences and secure key sites, including bridges over the

Caen Canal and River Orne. On D-Day, around 435 flights took off from the Daedalus airfield in Lee-on-Solent, more than anywhere else.

The initial beach footholds were hard won and it was not until the 26th June that the Allies captured Cherbourg. By the end of August, however, the Germans had retreated east of the Seine. Victory in Europe was achieved in May 1945. To sustain this year long campaign required good supplies of troops, vehicles, fuel and armaments. This was the responsibility of the US Transportation Corps. At the start of the war, Southampton's docks had a total length of 8.8 kilometres, served by around 100 kilometres of railway tracks. Although the city was badly damaged, at the start of 1944 the US transportation corps 14th port moved their headquarters to the Civic Centre in Southampton, with many other locations around the city. After the Normandy landings around 3.5 million troops left from Southampton, mostly American. Much of the graffiti on the so-called "D-Day wall" was probably carved during this period, hence the alternative name "American Wall". On the other side of the English Channel, Mulberry Harbour B was in use for 10 months, until regular channel ports were captured and their sabotaged harbours cleared for use. During this time some 2.5 million troops landed through Harbour B, 500,000 vehicles, and 4m tonnes of supplies.

Further Reading

Three Mile Limit	Blockade	Admiral Hawke
Naval Artillery	Battle of Copenhagen	Nelson's Last Walk
Nelson's Walk	Dreadnought	Torpedo Boats
Motor Launches	MTB 102	Southampton War Port
Southampton WWI and II	Spitfire	Blackouts
Portsmouth Bomb Map	Southwick Underground HQ	Southwick House
Normandy Landings	D-Day 75	Daedalus Airfield
14th Major Port		

Royal Castles and Palaces of the Solent

If you take a holiday beside or near the Solent, there are plenty of visitor attractions to visit. Actually, there are so many within an hour's drive it could be difficult to choose which ones to see. This article provides one solution by highlighting local places with royal connections. Many of these are castles or forts. Some have been used as royal residences or palaces of some kind. Those with an interest in royal or military history might plan itineraries which allow them to visit these royal castles and palaces around the Solent. The attractions highlighted in bold text are rated 4 or 4.5 out of 5, well worth the trip.

The Romans were the first to create stone buildings in Britain, although nearly 2000 years later not many of these survive. The outer walls of **Portchester castle** are Roman, however. There is also **Fishbourne Roman Palace**, near Chichester, which has been thoroughly excavated. Built in the first century, soon after the Roman conquest, it is the largest Roman residence discovered in Britain, richly decorated with mosaics. It may have been the home of Cogidubnus, a local chieftain and king supported by the Romans, which would indeed make it a palace.

The Solent continued to be an important region during anglo-saxon times, at the heart of their Wessex kingdom. Alfred organised the defence of his realm against the vikings by creating fortified towns called burhs. These include Wareham, Twyneham (Christchurch), Wilton (near Salisbury), Winchester, Southampton, Portchester, and Chichester. In some cases a burh was constructed within existing Roman walls, but the Saxons did not build in stone themselves. Instead they put up earth walls defended by wooden structures and stakes which, unsurprisingly, typically no longer survive. Remarkably, however, **Wareham** still has its turf walls, which can be walked inside one hour.

Henry I's queen, Matilda, was educated at **Romsey Abbey**, which was originally Saxon but re-founded by the Normans. She had to prove she was not a nun before they could marry.

Alfred and a number of other Kings of Wessex were buried in the Old Minster at Winchester, as well as Canute, his wife Emma, and son Harthacanute. The current **Winchester cathedral** dates back to the Norman period, but is believed to contain many of their bones. During medieval times a number of other kings and queens were crowned or married in the cathedral, including Richard I, Henry IV and Mary I.

Following the anglo-saxons and the vikings, the Normans once again started building in stone. **Corfe Castle** was first built during the time of William the Conqueror and remained in royal hands before being sold by Elizabeth I. It was one of the last remaining royalist strongholds to fall to Parliamentary forces in 1645 thanks to a defence organised by Lady Bankes. Subsequently it was slighted, or deliberately damaged, by Parliament as punishment or to prevent any recurrence of such resistance. Around 100 castles were slighted at this time and locally, moreover, two Bishop's palaces: Wolvesey Castle in Winchester, and Bishop's Waltham Palace.

The current **Carisbrooke Castle** building was also originally Norman. It was acquired from Isabella de Fortibus by Edward I in 1293. Charles I was imprisoned here for 14 months prior to his execution and his daughter Princess Elizabeth later died of pneumonia here. Princess Beatrice, Victoria's youngest daughter and Governor of the Isle of Wight, made the castle her summer home with updated accommodation and her own private garden. Though not formally a palace, it was nonetheless a royal residence as well as a royal castle.

The medieval kings and queens who followed the Normans developed and extended some existing castles, but not necessarily in a formally planned strategic fashion. From 1154, Portchester was a royal castle, repaired and reinforced, for example, by Edward II, and was used as an embarkation point for several royal campaigns to France. **Southampton's town walls** were completed by order of Edward III in response to the French raid of 1338, for example, not in anticipation of such an attack. Portsmouth was attacked repeatedly in the 14th century yet its defences developed only gradually. It was not until in the 1490s, during Henry VII's reign, that the Round Tower was rebuilt in stone, for example.

Henry VIII, on the other hand, undertook a major expansion of coastal defences to protect England from continental forces following his decision to split from Rome. His so-called "device forts" were positioned to defend harbours and anchorages, and designed both to focus artillery fire on enemy ships, and to protect the gunnery teams from attack by those vessels. Some 30 were constructed in 1539 alone, and the programme continued until 1546, at a very significant cost. There were 7 of these forts on the Isle of Wight, and another 5 elsewhere around the Solent. Three of the Isle of Wight forts survive, and four of the other Solent forts, although typically they have been altered or extended significantly over the years. Some of the original Henry VIII design is still visible at **Calshot Castle**, **Hurst Castle**, **Southsea Castle** and **Yarmouth Castle**.

It was from Southsea Castle that Henry watched the battle of the Solent, where his flagship the Mary Rose sank. Fortunately its remains were preserved in the sea mud, and can now be viewed in **Portsmouth Historic Dockyard**, which is also home to Nelson's HMS Victory, and HMS Warrior. During Elizabeth I's reign Portsmouth's defences were further extended and improved, more stone walls were constructed, and towers developed into bastions. In the late 1600s, under the Stuarts, barracks were built to accommodate the defensive force and dockyard properly fortified. **Portmouth's millennium promenade** starts from Spur Redoubt near Clarence Pier and finishes on The Hard, via Old Portsmouth, and Camber dock.

Another major phase of construction was recommended by the 1860 Royal Commission on the Defence of the United Kingdom. So-called Palmerston forts, batteries and redoubts were constructed to defend Portsmouth and the Solent. According to the map on Wikipedia, there are 10 of these at the western approach to the Solent, 10 on the east Wight, 4 in the coastal waters off Portsmouth, and 22 on the land around Portsmouth itself. Some of these were new, such as **Fort Brockhurst,** the **Needles Battery**, and **Puckpool Battery**. Others were extended or re-constructed Henry VIII forts, such as Calshot Castle, Hurst Castle, Southsea Castle, and Fort Victoria. Palmerston was prime minister at the time, and strongly in favour of the scheme. His country house in Romsey, **Broadlands**, was later home to Earl Mountbatten of Burma. Elizabeth II spent

her honeymoon there with Prince Philip, and Charles and Diana later also stayed there at the start of theirs.

Osborne House in East Cowes on the Isle of Wight was home to Queen Victoria, Prince Albert, and their nine children. Albert helped with its design. Though not officially a palace, Victoria stayed here for significant periods, both with Albert and after his death. She died here in January 1901. The Durbar room was built for state functions and houses gifts from Victoria's Golden and Diamond jubilees. Albert also helped design **St Mildred's church** in Whippingham nearby, which houses the tomb of Princess Beatrice and her husband Princess Henry of Battenburg. As a princess, Victoria helped her mother open the Royal Pier in Southampton, watched by 20,000 spectators. She was patron to the Royal Yacht Club in Southampton, whose first club house is just opposite the pier. Prince Albert attended its opening. Victoria also proposed and laid the foundation stone for the Royal Victoria Hospital in Netley. Though the hospital itself has been demolished, the hospital chapel can still be visited in the middle of the 200 acre **Royal Victoria Country Park**. The **Royal Yacht Squadron** building in Cowes was originally a Henry VIII castle, and was adapted for its current use during the 1850s.

From time to time, the Solent has hosted royalty from other countries. In 1403, Joan of Navarre married Henry IV in Winchester Cathedral. In 1445, Margaret of Anjou landed in Portsmouth before marrying Henry VI in **Titchfield Abbey**. In 1554, Philip of Spain landed in Southampton before marrying Mary I, also in Winchester Cathedral. In 1662, Catherine of Braganza arrived in Portsmouth and married Charles II in Domus Dei, now the **Royal Garrison Church**, following an earlier secret Catholic ceremony. Princess Yurievskaya, daughter of Tsar Alexander II, is buried in Northney village church, on Hayling Island.

The **New Forest** was designated a royal forest by William the Conqueror specifically for hunting. The **Rufus Stone** marks the spot where his son, King William II, was killed while hunting there. In Norman and medieval times there were several royal hunting lodges nearby although none still survive. Clarendon Palace, outside Salisbury, hosted norman and medieval hunting parties but is now just a ruin. Queens House (also known as Kings House) in Lyndhurst was given to Eleanor of Castile in 1297 who stayed there during Edward I's wars against the Welsh. It was re-built and used as a hunting lodge by Charles I. This house is currently the local headquarters of the Forestry Commission. Another stately home with royal connections is **New Park Manor** near Brockenhurst, now a hotel. This was used by Charles II as a hunting lodge and also visited by Nell Gwynn. The **Peninsula Barracks** in Winchester are built on the site of an unfinished Charles II palace, the King's House.

Also dating back to the 1600s is **Goodwood House**, bought by the first Duke of Richmond, son of Charles II, so he could participate in the nearby Charlton Hunt. The house still belongs to the Richmonds. Edward VII was a frequent guest during Goodwood Raceweek, as well as his wife Queen Alexandra, mistress Mrs Keppel, and son George V. Finally, Goodwood is on the **Monarch's Way**, a long distance footpath along the 625 mile route followed by Charles II to escape England after the Battle of Worcester. The Monarch's Way runs through picturesque countryside, passing

by Salisbury, Romsey, Winchester, and Rowland's Castle on its way to Shoreham, where Charles finally set sail for France.

Members of royal family continue to open local facilities. Empress Dock was opened in 1890 by Queen Victoria, and King George V the Graving Dock in 1934. In 2023 the Princess of Wales opened Hope Street's women's shelter in Southampton and the Princess Royal opened Alford School of Military Music in Portsmouth. In 2019 Prince Charles opened the new Centenary Garden at **Exbury Gardens**. The nearby **Beaulieu Motor Museum** houses the Royal Caravan, owned by the Princess Royal. You can also visit **Beaulieu Palace House**.

Cunard began giving its ships royal names starting the Queen Mary, launched in Glasgow by Queen Mary herself in 1934, and continuing with the Queen Elizabeth, launched by the Queen Mother in 1938, and the QE2, launched by Queen Elizabeth II in 1967. (The Queen Mary and QE2 survive as floating hotels in Long Beach and Dubai, respectively.) Cunard's subsequent Queens have been named in Southampton by Queen Elizabeth II — Queen Mary 2 in 2004, and Queen Elizabeth in 2010 — and the Duchess of Cornwall — Queen Victoria in 2007. These **Cunard cruise ships** are still in service and call regularly at Southampton.

Further Reading

Fishbourne Royal Palace
Winchester Cathedral
Carisbrooke Castle
Hurst Castle
Portsmouth Dockyard
Needles Battery
Osborne House
Titchfield Abbey
New Forest
New Park Manor
Monarch's Way
Exbury Gardens
Beaulieu Palace House
Portchester Castle
Matilda of Scotland
Southampton Town Walls
Southsea Castle
Millennium Walk
Puckpool Battery
St Mildreds Church
Royal Garrison Church
Rufus Stone
Goodwood Estate
Hope Street
Royal Caravan
Cunard's Queens
Wareham Town Walls
Corfe Castle
Calshot Castle
Yarmouth Castle
Fort Brockhurst
Broadlands House
Victoria Country Park
Royal Yacht Squadron
Queens House
King's House
Military Music Schools
Beaulieu Motor Museum

New Forest

To the north of the western Solent is the New Forest national park. This was designated a royal hunting ground by William the Conqueror in around 1079. His son and heir William Rufus was killed there in 1100. After hunting fell out of favour, the New Forest was an important source of timber for the Royal Navy. These days, tourism is more important than either hunting or forestry.

The forest contains woodland, heathland, grassland, bogs and some tree plantations. Some local residents have common rights, and are known as Commoners. These rights may include permission to graze horses and cattle, to gather firewood, and for pigs to eat acorns and beechnuts in the autumn. Much of the forest is a site of scientific interest with significant numbers of birds, reptiles and amphibians. It is common to encounter donkeys and deer as well as the famous New Forest ponies. There are many paths and cycleways, although these can be muddy in winter.

New Forest Ponies are a recognised breed, small, strong, and sure-footed. Commoners who own particular plots of land have to right to allow their ponies to wander freely. Many belong to families which have had this right for generations. The historic New Forest Verderers employ Agisters who, together with their owners, look after the ponies. Before the winter, ponies are gathered in and their condition assessed. Ponies are branded with their owner's mark. As the ponies may wander freely, they often graze beside and cross the forest roads. Drivers must therefore observe the 40 mph speed limit and watch out for ponies, particularly in the dark.

The historic New Forest has an area 380 square kilometres (150 square miles), whereas the National Park, created in 2005, covers 566 square kilometres (219 square miles). Only around 38 thousand people live in the national park, but this receives over 14 million visitors per year. There are four larger villages and a number of smaller ones. Just outside the forest boundary are several larger towns including Totton to the east and Lymington to the south. There is an extensive range of visitor accommodation in or near the forest.

Most visitors will reach the forest via the M27. This motorway ends at Cadnam but continues across the forest as the busy A31 dual carriageway toward Bournemouth and other Dorset attractions. Other roads through the forest can also have heavy traffic during the summer, particular in and around Lyndhurst.

The train between Southampton and Bournemouth stops at Ashurst, with its popular campsite, and Brockenhurst, where you can also camp or hire bicycles. There are regular buses from Southampton to Lyndhurst and Lymington, as well as the so-called Waterside (Marchwood, Hythe, Dibden Purlieu, Fawley) and Calshot Beach. There are also three open top bus routes operating during the summer, reaching most popular tourist attractions. A small passenger ferry runs from Town Quay in Southampton to the 700 yard long pier in Hythe, with a narrow gauge railway which dates back to 1909, and has been electrified since 1922. There is a car ferry from Yarmouth on the Isle of Wight to Lymington, which also has a train service reaching the main line at Brockenhurst.

The England Coast Path alongside the Solent from Milford on Sea, passing through Keyhaven and the Pennington Marshes nature reserve to reach Lymington. You can also walk from Keyhaven to Hurst Castle via the shingle spit. The coast path route is mainly shared with the pre-existing Solent Way. Between Lymington and Hythe this route is mostly inland, but there is a stretch which follows the river between Beaulieu and Bucklers Hard. Another waterside walk takes you from Fawley to Calshot – but check the tide times as some of this path may be underwater at high tide. The New Forest Park authority web site has dozens of popular walking and cycling routes. An easy route to ride with the family follows the old railway line from Brockenhurst to Burley.

Some villages and towns in or near the New Forest and the Solent are described briefly below.

Beaulieu village has a picturesque main street with interesting shops, cafés, and the Montagu Arms hotel and restaurant. To the north side of the tidal Beaulieu River is the former Cistercian abbey. This is now the home to the Montagu family, and also houses the National Motor Museum. Parts of the house and gardens can also be visited, and there is an extensive programme of events.

Brockenhurst is the largest village within the New Forest itself. It has many cafés, pubs, bars and restaurants, and a good range of shops. The village cricket green is in front of the imposing Balmer Lawn Hotel. It has good railway and bus connections, camping and bicycle hire.

Bucklers Hard is a hamlet on the Beaulieu river, south of the main Beaulieu village. It was used for ship-building, particularly during the 1700s. Over 50 ships were built there, including three which fought at the Battle of Trafalgar. There is a small maritime museum, including exhibits from the Gypsy Moth IV which Sir Francis Chichester sailed round the world starting from here. You can eat or stay at the Master Builder's House hotel. There is a path between Bucklers Hard and Beaulieu. You can also take a river cruise during the summer.

Calshot Activities Centre has facilities for climbing, track cycling, skiing and snowboarding. You can also go kayaking, kite surfing, paddle boarding, power-boating, sailing, or wind surfing. There is a shingle beach with excellent views of the Isle of Wight and the marine traffic to and from Southampton. The hangar and castle at Calshot both have historic significance. You can camp or park your caravan or motorhome here.

Exbury Gardens have a famous collection of rhododendrons, which flower during the spring. Exbury is located between Beaulieu and Lepe. There are paths through the grounds passing through the extensive woods, meadows, ponds, bridges, and specialist gardens, with views across the river. Children may also enjoy taking the steam railway which loops through the grounds.

Hythe is on the western shore of Southampton Water. There are some interesting shops and waterside restaurants. The Hythe ferry provides a short but exciting trip across Southampton Water. There are good views of the docks from the pier and from the Seashells bar and restaurant.

Keyhaven is a hamlet on the Solent. Originally a fishing village, its harbour is now home to a yacht club. A ferry runs to Hurst Castle in the summer. There are fine views from Keyhaven of the castle, and also the Isle of Wight beyond. Hurst Castle was built as one of Henry VIII's device forts to protect the western entrance to the Solent. Charles I was later imprisoned here briefly on his way back from the Isle of Wight to London. The castle's defences were enhanced during the 19th and 20th centuries. It also saw service as a hospital during the Napoleonic wars. The castle is connected to the mainland by a shingle spit, which has required stabilising in recent years.

Lepe Country Park is a strip of coast on the Solent. The beach and café are popular with families on fine days. There are good views of the Isle of Wight. Walking trails take you through the park, and there is a more demanding 5 mile loop passing through neighbouring woods and fields. Lepe Beach was used to construct concrete caissons used in the D-Day landings, and some World War 2 remains can be seen along the shore to the east of the café and car parking area.

Lymington is a port town with a picturesque harbour and three large marinas. Dating back to the Domesday book or earlier, the quay and high street were established by Earl de Redvers in 1250, who also gave permission for a market. The Charter Market is still held every Saturday, running the length of the high street, which has many interesting Georgian and Victorian buildings. Lymington has an extensive range of shops, supermarkets, cafés and restaurants. The sea water baths opened in 1833 and provide a range of activities, and an inflatable obstacle course, from May to September. From the early 1800s Lymington has been known for its boat and yacht building. Ferries to the Isle of Wight leave from the opposite side of the Lymington river, with the train stopping first in the main town then crossing the water to reach the ferry port.

Lyndhurst is the important settlement in the New Forest. The manor was mentioned in the Domesday Book, and was held by the royal family for several periods between 1270 and 1827. A royal park was attached to the manor in the middle ages, where the Lime Wood Hotel is presently located. Alice Liddell lived near Lyndhurst after she married and is buried in the Church of St and All Angels. A mirror belonging to her is on display at the local Heritage Centre, located in the central car park. Lyndhurst is the administrative capital of the New Forest district council and the local headquarters of the Forestry Commission. The ancient Verderer's Court meets in the Queen's house (also called the King's House). There has been a building here from the reign of Edward I when a wooden manor house was built here for Queen Eleanor of Castile. The current building mainly dates back to Charles I and II. Lyndhurst is near the centre of the New Forest, on the junction of the A35 and the A337. A one way system takes traffic round the busy village centre. There are many cafes, restaurants, shops and hotels. Foxlease was an important centre for the girl guides since 1922, but has now closed. Several walks through the forest start in Lyndhurst.

Minstead is a small forest village. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle is buried with his wife in the churchyard (they were moved after their family home in Sussex was sold). You may visit the informal Furzey Gardens and tea room. The nearby Rufus Stone marks the spot where William Rufus was shot.

Pennington is a suburb of Lymington and its marshes were previously used to create salt. The salterns were in use from the 1100s until 1865. They were replaced by oyster beds but these too are no longer in use. The old salt lagoons are now home to a variety of gulls, terns, waders and waterfowl, and the water meadows are used in the summer by New Forest Commoners to graze horses and cattle. These can be seen by walking along the sea wall from Lymington to Keyhaven.

Rhinefield House Hotel is on a site which has been inhabited since the Domesday book. The current building dates to the 1880s. It was previously home to a nurseryman who planted many conifers in the area. These are now the tallest trees in the New Forest with some 50 metre high redwoods. There is an ornamental drive through these where you can park and walk through these impressive specimens. There is also a cycle route to the trees from Brockenhurst Station.

Totton is a town to the west of Southampton, just outside the New Forest, adjoining the village of Eling. The Test Way starts (or finishes) at Eling Quay and passes through Totton, and via the popular Testwood lakes recreation area. Eling tidal mill is next to the medieval toll bridge. The mill is one of only two working tidal mills in Britain and can be visited during the winter months.

The New Forest has a number of wildlife attractions, including Longdown Activity Farm, near Ashurst; the New Forest Wildlife Park, also near Ashurst; Liberty's Owl, Raptor and Reptile Centre, near Ringwood; and the Bolderwood Deer Sanctuary, in Bolderwood, to the west of Lyndhurst.

Further Reading

New Forest
Commoners
Hythe Ferry
Hurst Castle Walk
New Forest Walks
Beaulieu
Master Builders House
Exbury Gardens
Lepe D Day History
Lymington Market
Lyndhurst Walks
Rhinefield Woodland
Eling Experience
Longdown Farm
Bolderwood Deer Sanctuary

More About the Forest
Accommodation
Solent Way
Calshot Walk
Old Railway Cycle Route
Beaulieu Estate
Calshot Activities Centre
Hurst Castle
Lymington
Lyndhurst
Pennington Marshes
Totton and Eling
Minstead
New Forest Wildlife Park

New Forest History
Public Transport
Lymington Marshes
Bucklers Hard Walk
New Forest Cycling
Bucklers Hard
Seashells
Lepe Country Park
Lymington Ferries
Heritage Centre
Rhinefield House Hotel
Eling Tide Mill
Furzey Gardens
Libertys Centre

Winchester History and Attractions

Winchester is around 13 miles north of Southampton, so it is far from the Solent. On the other hand, it is Hampshire's county town and part of the Solent Go travel card region. Historically Southampton and Winchester have strong links, and today these cities are linked by the M3 motorway and main line railway. Travelling between them takes around quarter of an hour by rail, half an hour by car, or fifty minutes by bus. Portsmouth is around fifty minutes by rail or car.

Winchester was inhabited before the Roman conquest. An iron age town developed on the site, with several nearby hill forts, forming a centre for Celtic Britons of the Belgae tribe. They may have called their settlement Wenta or Venta, and the Romans called it Venta Belgarum. Roman roads connected Winchester to other towns such as Chichester. Even now several roads leaving Winchester follow the same routes, which can be seen on a road map. During the third century, the Romans surrounded Winchester with stone walls. A small section of Roman wall can still be seen inset into the medieval wall to the south of the City Mill alongside to the River Itchen.

After the Romans left Britain, Jutes occupied the region, which next became part of the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Wessex. The city was now known as Wintanceaster, or Wintan castle. In the 662 the bishop of Wessex moved his seat from Dorchester on the Thames to Winchester, and its main church became a cathedral, now known as the Old Minster. After a low point in 878 when Alfred the Great was forced to retreat to Athelney in the Somerset marshes, he succeeded in rallying his kingdom and fighting back against the Vikings at the Battle of Edington. He re-organised Saxon defences by creating thirty three fortified towns known as burhs, of which Winchester was the largest, a mobile army, and small fleet. Alfred was around 50 when he died, and was buried in the Old Minster. His daughter Aethelflaed and son Edward the Elder continued to fight the Vikings, and Edward's son Athelstan became the first King of all England after he conquered York.

Alfred also started construction of a New Minster, which was completed by his son Edward. The body of Saint Swithun, a famous bishop of Winchester in the 800s, was housed in the minster complex. After the Norman conquest, however, a new cathedral was built. This was consecrated in 1093, after which the Saxon minsters were demolished. Saint Swithun is still one of saints the cathedral is dedicated to. The current structure was mainly completed by 1532. It houses bones which are believed to belong to Alfred the Great, King Canute and his wife Queen Emma, William Rufus and King Egbert, although these were removed from their original chests in the Civil War and mixed up. The cathedral was constructed on low ground near the River Itchen, on a layer of beech trees. By 1905 some of the wood had started to rot and the cathedral was in danger of collapsing. Repairs were complex as any trench soon filled with groundwater. Diver William Walker was employed to lay bags of cement to strengthen the trenches. He worked 6 or 7 hours a day for nearly six years to complete this task, using over 25,000 bags of cement, 115,000 concrete blocks and 900,000 bricks. The newly completed cathedral museum features the 12th century Winchester Bible, details of monastic life in St Swithun's priory, and the royal mortuary chests.

Henry I ordered the New Minster to relocate to Hyde, north of the city walls. The new Hyde Abbey church was consecrated in 1110 and the remains of King Alfred, Queen Aelswith and King Edward the Elder reburied there. It was dissolved in 1539 by Henry VIII and only its gatehouse remains. The Abbey Gardens are on part of the site of the Nunnaminster, founded by Aelswith. None of the original Saxon buildings remain. The Abbey House was built in 1751, and the Guildhall dates from 1873. St John's almshouse on the other side of the Broadway has buildings from the 1400s.

Winchester Castle was built in 1067 immediately following the Norman Conquest. Henry II built a stone keep to house the royal treasury and the Domesday Book. Henry III built the Great Hall between 1222 and 1235. This part of the castle remains, and is grade I listed. The Hall houses the Round Table, which also dates from the 1200s, and was repainted for Henry VIII. The castle continued as a royal residence until 1558 when it was handed by Elizabeth I to the city. It was held by royalists during the Civil War, fell to Parliament in 1646, and demolished by Cromwell in 1648.

The Hospital of St Cross was founded in 1136 by Henry Blois, younger brother to King Stephen, and Bishop of Winchester. This almshouse looks after 25 old men who belong to either the Order of the Hospital of St Cross, or the Order of Noble Poverty. The impressive building, dating from the 1300 to 1500s, stands in water meadows a short walk to the south of the cathedral and college. Bishop Henry also commissioned the illuminated Winchester Bible, on display in the cathedral.

In 1141 during the Anarchy following the death of crown prince William in the White Ship, Bishop Henry laid siege to supporters of Empress Matilda in Winchester Castle. He was then surprised by an army led from Oxford by Empress Matilda herself. Henry retreated to the Bishop's Palace, also known as Wolvesey Castle, and set fire to the city. Supporters of the rival claimant led by Queen Matilda, attacked and Empress Matilda retreated. The Anarchy ended when Stephen agreed in 1153 that Empress Matilda's son Henry would succeed to the throne following his death, and Stephen passed away a year later. Another Bishop of Winchester, William of Wykeham, founded Winchester College in 1392, and helped to restore the cathedral and city.

Winchester College was created to prepare 70 poor scholars for study at New College, Oxford, where they could train as priests. The school continues to exist on its original site, just south of the cathedral, but has expanded to around 800 pupils, first admitting females in 2022. There are buildings dating from 1394 to the present day, with 94 of them listed. You can book a group tour to see some of these, including the medieval Outer Gate, Outer Court, Chapel and Cloisters.

The nearby Pilgrims School is located inside the cathedral close. It has a hall from 1308 featuring one of the earliest hammerbeam ceilings. This can be visited on Winchester Heritage Open Days.

The Buttercross (or City Cross) in the centre of pedestrianised High Street dates to the 1400s, and features statues of the Virgin Mary and other saints. It is a scheduled ancient monument. Through the arch to the cathedral is the grade II listed Church of St Lawrence, which was originally Norman.

The City Mill was recorded in the Domesday Book, and some of its timbers date back this time. It was given to the city in 1554 by Queen Mary I following her marriage to Phillip of Spain in Winchester Cathedral. The current building dates back to 1744. It is now managed by the National Trust, and houses a café as well as the water-powered mill wheel. A night-vision camera monitoring the river below has captured sightings of otters passing through the city centre.

The city walls were largely demolished during the 1700 and 1800s. A long stretch of these walls still exists to the southeast, by the river below City Mill and extending round to Wolvesey Castle. Two of the six gates survive, the Westgate at the top of the High Street, mostly dating from the 1100s, and the Kingsgate south of the cathedral, partly dating from the 1300s. Within Kingsgate is the entrance to the Church of St Swithun upon Kingsgate, which was first recorded in 1164.

Charles II planned to replace the castle with a palace called the King's House but he died before it was completed. The building was used to house prisoners of war during the 1700s, then as a barracks during the Napoleonic Wars. The barracks continued and expanded until the second world war. The nearby Serle's house was also acquired, and was known as the Lower Barracks, in contrast with the original or Upper Barracks. In 1894 the King's House burned down and was rebuilt, retaining some of the original building materials and design. The London-Southampton railway line had a halt at the barracks where troops could board trains. This former barracks complex now houses five military museums, with a sixth in the countryside to the north of the city.

Jane Austen was born in a north Hampshire village, Steventon, where her father was rector. When he retired the family moved to Bath and then, after he died, to Southampton. Her brother Edward then provided them accommodation in Chawton. In 1817 Jane fell ill and spent her last two months, just 41, in College Street in Winchester. She is buried in the north aisle of the cathedral.

The Royal Theatre on Jewry Street first opened in 1914. It became a full-time cinema in 1922, but was threatened with closure in 1974. A charitable fund was set up, purchased the building, and restored it, reopening in 1978. The building was originally the Market Hotel, dating from 1850. Since 1966, the Chesil Theatre has put on amateur productions in the medieval church of St Peters.

An impressive larger than life statue of King Alfred stands in the Broadway between the bus station and the Guildhall. This was completed in 1901 and is grade II listed. The grade II listed Dame Elisabeth Frink's Horse and Rider Statue has stood in the High Street since 1973. A statue of Licoricia of Winchester was unveiled in Jewry Street in 2022. Licoricia was described as the most important Jewish woman in medieval England. A successful businesswoman and member of Winchester's Jewish community, she lent money to Henry III and other English nobility.

The Winchester City Museum is centrally located between the Buttercross and cathedral. It covers the history of the city from the Iron Age, has Roman and Saxon costumes you can try on, displays two purses and a spool case belonging to Jane Austen, and a model of Victorian Winchester.

The Winchester Hoard, found in a field near Winchester in 2000, has two gold jewellery sets pre-dating Roman Britain. Worth over £300,000 pounds, the hoard is now in the British Museum.

You can probably walk past Winchester's central attractions in half a day, a route of around 3 miles. You should allow more time if you wish to look inside the Cathedral, Great Hall, Military or City Museums, City Mill, Wolvesey Castle, or take a guided tour of the College.

Winchester holds a number of festivals each year. The Hat Fair is an outdoor arts festival held on the first weekend in July. Boomtown is a pop festival takes place in August in a valley beside the A31 east of the city, attended by over 60,000. The Science Centre is also on the A31 just outside Winchester, and aims to bring science alive for children and their families. The popular Winchester Christmas market operates in the grounds of the cathedral, typically from the middle of November.

The Itchen Navigation ran from Winchester to Southampton, opening in 1710. You can walk its 10 mile length in a day. It is possible that before this canal opened stone from Caen was transported via the River Itchen to construct the cathedral. You can also follow the Itchen Way to the source of this river. You may prefer, however, a shorter walk along some quiet and picturesque stretches of the canal and river, in which case you are recommended to follow Discovering Britain's 4 mile Winchester Trail along these waterways. An alternative route would involve climbing St Catherines Hill to see its ancient hill fort and mizmaze, for example following the 2 kilometre route described by the Ambling Path. You can combine these two walks for views of the city and watermeadows.

Several other longer walking routes also start in Winchester. The 42 km Clarendon Way takes you to Salisbury. The 192 km Pilgrims' Way goes all the way to Canterbury. The similarly named Pilgrims' Trail takes you 47 km to Portsmouth where you can catch a ferry to France and then walk on to Mont-St-Michel. The 55 km St Swithun's Way goes to Farnham in Surrey. And the 160 km South Downs Way takes you through the national park to Eastbourne in East Sussex.

Further Reading

City of Winchester	Alfred the Great	Winchester Bible
Winchester Cathedral	Hyde Abbey	Abbey Gardens
Winchester Castle	Rout of Winchester	St Cross Hospital
Winchester College History	Winchester College Architecture	Pilgrim Hall
Winchester City Mill	Winchester City Walls	City Walls Article
Old Barracks and Museum	Jane Austen at 8 College Street	City Museum
Winchester Hoard	Statue of Licoricia of Winchester	Licoricia Article
Winchester Festivals	Boomtown Festival	Science Centre
City Walking Trail	Water Meadow Walk	St Catherines Hill
St Catherines Hill Walk	Itchen Navigation	Itchen Way
Clarendon Way	Pilgrims Way	Pilgrims Trail
St Swithuns Way	South Downs Way	Solent Go

Part II
Isle of Wight

Explore the Isle of Wight On-Line and On Foot

If you are staying in Southampton or Portsmouth for a week or more, you should visit the Isle of Wight. There is a wealth of interesting and historic sights, beaches, and great walking routes. Ferries run from both Portsmouth and Southampton taking cars or foot passengers across the Solent. Britain's last hovercraft service also operates between Southsea and Ryde. The Isle of Wight has been a popular holiday destination for two hundred years. In the 1810s, Jane Austen wrote *"she thinks of nothing but the Isle of Wight, and she calls it the Island, as if there were not another Island in the world*". Points of interest include:

- it is the largest island off England, with many beaches, walks, and cycle routes
- roughly half the island is a recognised Area of Natural Beauty
- the Needles and Alum Bay are iconic natural features
- historic attractions include houses and castles with royal connections
- other attractions include a model village, alpaca and garlic farms, and a postcard museum
- events include the popular music festival, round the island yacht race, and scooter rally
- famous writers have stayed here to benefit from the healthy, peaceful atmosphere
- the first practical hovercraft, the Saunders-Roe Nautical 1 (SR.N1), was built here in 1959

There is a wealth of information available on-line, on wikipedia, wightpedia, and specialist web sites. This site has a number of documents with summary information and links to more sources:

Tourism on the Wight	Walking on the Wight
History of the Island to the 1700s	Forts and Castles
Island Industry	Literary Wight
History of the Island from 1800	Royal Wight
Cowes	Newport
Ryde	Sandown and Shanklin
Ventnor and the West Wight	Isle of Wight Trivia Quiz

The Isle of Wight is separated from the mainland by a stretch of water, or strait, called the Solent. This was originally a river, but this was drowned by rising sea levels at the end of the ice age. There is also a tidal estuary running down from Southampton to the Solent, formally known as Southampton Water, which is often also assumed to be part of the Solent. The western end of the Solent is longer and narrower than the eastern end, and the differences gives rise to extra tides. The longer periods of high water, together with the shelter provided by the island, have made these waters popular for recreational sailing and commercial shipping.

Archaeological evidence shows that the island has been inhabited since the stone age. The earliest surviving building appears to be Carisbrooke Castle — some of its current structure dates back to around 1100. Until the 1800s, the population of the island remained low, with most people involved in agriculture or related work. Piracy and smuggling were apparently also common. The total of 24,000 in 1801 increased to 88,000 by 1911, as manufacturing and tourism provided more diverse employment. A high proportion of the current population are in their 50s or older, since

the island is now a popular place to retire. Those who have grown up here, or spent time on holiday when they were younger, are likely to return as they grow older.

Further Facts about the Isle of Wight

Over 20 dinosaur species have been found on the island, including 7 new to science
Some of the stone tools found on the island may be as much as 400,000 years old
A stone age boat building site has been discovered in shallow water off the island
Around 7000 years ago, the island was finally cut off from mainland Britain by rising sea levels
The Romans used the island as an agricultural base and over 5 villas have been discovered
The Domesday Book records 24 watermills, 10 churches and 126 properties on the island
The French raided the island around 5 times during the 100 years war, sacking Newtown
King Charles I spent a year imprisoned on the Isle of Wight before his execution
The first painting Turner exhibited at the Royal Academy is a seascape of the Needles by moonlight
Ryde pier is first opened in 1814; it is now the world's oldest seaside pleasure pier
In 1820 the first scheduled steamship service (between Southampton and Cowes) began operating
Victoria and Albert bought their Isle of Wight home in 1845 and Victoria died there in 1901
In 1851 the first Americas Cup yacht race was held off Cowes
Tennyson rented his Isle of Wight home in 1853 and stayed there every winter until his death
In 1862 the island's first railway line (between Newport and Cowes) opened
In 1892 the island's first cliff face lift opened in Shanklin
In 1897 the island's first telephone network was established
In 1921 the island's first scheduled bus service (between Newport to Cowes) began
In 1938 one of the first radar stations opened on St Boniface Down
To support the D-Day landings one of the Operation PLUTO pipelines ran from the island
The island hosted the UK's space programme in the 1950s
The Rowridge aerial began transmitting TV in 1954, reaching as far as Brighton and Bournemouth
The 1970 Isle of Wight Festival is claimed to have an audience of over half a million people
The island's population is around 140,000 but visitors can double this number in the summer
The modern Isle of Wight Festival (restarted in 2002) has attracted over 50,000 people
There are around 3,000 red squirrels on the island (and no grey squirrels)
The round the island coast path is around 70 miles (115 kilometres) long
The island has over 500 miles of public footpaths
The round the island cycle route is around 65 miles long
The standard round the island sailing course is just over 50 nautical miles (around 58 miles)
The fastest time to swim around the island is 15 hours and 9 minutes
The fastest monohull circumnavigation is 3 hours, 43 minutes and 50 seconds
The fastest time on a kiteboard is 2 hours, 32 mins and 25 seconds
The fastest multihull circumnavigation is 2 hours, 2 minutes and 31 seconds
The Red Jet 6 catamaran has the motorised record: 1 hour, 17 minutes and 17 seconds
There are no bridges or tunnels connecting the island to the mainland
There is only one stretch of dual carriageway on the island
There is one public electric rail line still operating and one volunteer-run steam train
The island was part of Hampshire until 1890, when it became a separate county
The island is a unitary authority, so it has its own local government, and two MPs

Tourism on the Wight

Most visitors reach the Isle of Wight by ferry. Car ferries run from Portsmouth to Fishbourne (near Wootton), Southampton to East Cowes and from Lymington to Yarmouth. Faster, passenger only catamarans run from Southampton to West Cowes, Portsmouth Harbour to Ryde Pier and the fastest crossing of all is by hovercraft from Southsea to Ryde. There are many harbours and marinas on both sides of the Solent, so some will travel by yacht or motorboat. There are also two airfields, so pilots may fly themselves to Bembridge or Sandown. (There used to be an airport in Westridge near Ryde, but this closed after World War II, and is now a Tesco superstore.)

There is an electric train service from Ryde Pier to Shanklin, calling at Brading, Sandown and Lake. The island also has an extensive bus network, with services reaching almost all towns and larger villages, particularly in the summer when additional services and times are added. For those who bring their own car, it is important to note that "*Island roads are different"*: there is no motorway, one short stretch of dual carriage, many narrow country roads, and it is best to assume that journeys will take longer than you might expect. The main road from Blackgang and Niton to Ventnor, Undercliff Drive, was cut off by a landslip in 2014. Though this has re-opened for pedestrians and cyclists, other traffic must travel via Whitwell. Even if you are not diverted, you may be delayed by a horse or tractor moving slowly ahead of you.

The largest island beaches are in Ryde, Sandown and Shanklin, and there is plentiful holiday accommodation in each of these towns. Elsewhere you can also find a variety of places to stay, from camp sites, holiday parks, bed and breakfast, to boutique hotels. The island is around 23 miles from east to west (about one hour by car), and 15 miles from north to south (about 40 minutes). It is worthwhile planning how you intend to spend your time so you choose somewhere to stay near your preferred attractions. If you will be using public transport note that the bus network has a main hub in Newport, covering all of the island, and a secondary one in Ryde, covering the East Wight.

In 1842 a large whale washed up on the island and its skeleton was auctioned off. Alexander Dabell brought this to his newly acquired pleasure gardens at Blackgang Chine, which opened in 1843. The site has been owned by the family ever since, and is a popular destination for families with young children, who enjoy the life-size animatronic dinosaurs, and rides.

The Needles are a line of chalk rocks in the sea at the western end of the island. Around half a mile to the east is Alum Bay, where there is a small amusement park. During the summer, a chair lift takes visitors down to the beach, with views of the famous coloured sands in the cliff. Boat trips leave from the beach to give a sea level view of the Needles. You can also walk from the pleasure park to the Needles battery, or take the open-topped bus. You can visit the old (Victorian) and new (World War II) batteries, managed by the National Trust, and the site of the space rocket testing programme. Even if you are not interested in the history of the rockets, it is worth taking the nearby path to the cliff edge for the best view of the Needles from on land.

There are also funfairs beside the beaches at Ryde and Sandown, and a theatre at Shanklin.

There are a number of wildlife attractions, featuring tigers, monkeys, meerkats, donkeys, butterflies, and birds of prey. Tapnell Farm Park has a range of animals including sheep, goats, pigs, and wallabies. The Farm Park has undercover or outdoor activities to enjoy, as well as on site accommodation. West Wight Alpacas and Llamas allows you to walk with one of these animals.

The island has a number of other beaches, many of which are also popular with locals and visitors. Compton Bay faces south-west and often provides good conditions for surfing, wind-surfing, or kiteboarding. Compared to the large sandy beaches of the east Wight, it is undeveloped, with just an ice cream van in its small car park. Round the corner is Brook Beach, also popular with surfers, but also fossil hunters. The largest fossils have been found in or under the cliffs between here and Blackgang Chine. This is a long stretch of coast, which can be accessed from Chilton Chine, Grange Chine, or Shepherds Chine. (The steps down to the beach at Whale Chine have, however, been closed for a while.) A chine is a small ravine cut by a stream running down to the sea.

The arched rock at Freshwater Bay fell during a storm in 1992, but there are still interesting chalk cliffs, stacks and caves to see. Totland Bay and Colwell Bay are linked by a stretch of sea wall you can walk along at any time all year. These two bays are popular with tourists in the summer when the beachside cafe, restaurant and pub are open. There is a grassy area at Fort Victoria between the fort and the narrow beach, which is a popular picnic spot on sunny days. Gurnard also has a green, and is connected to Cowes by Egypt Esplanade, another pleasant seaside stroll. There are clean sandy beaches at Seagrove and Priory Bay, and a shingle one at St Helens Duver, which has a busy cafe during the summer. Whitecliff Bay also has a summer cafe, and some interesting geology. You can follow the sea wall from Monk's Bay via Ventnor beach to Steephill cove, albeit you must climb some steps or slopes to reach this cove.

The two most popular historic attractions on the island, Carisbrooke Castle and Osborne House, are described elsewhere on this web site, so are not covered here. There are however numerous other places to visit, and a number of them are mentioned below, albeit not a complete list.

Arreton Barns provides artisan studios and shopping in a beautiful traditional village environment.

Bembridge Windmill, the island's last surviving windmill, dates from the 1700s. This National Trust site is open for visitors during the summer.

Brading Roman Villa has an undercover visitors centre and museum presenting preserved mosaic floors and interesting Roman archaeological artefacts.

Cowes High Street. This pedestrianised area has a range of interesting shops, with plenty of clothing, gifts, souvenirs, and specialist sailing items, plus several cafes, pubs and restaurants.

Culver Down provides great sea views of Portsmouth, Chichester Harbour, and the English Channel, chalk downland walks, a monument to the Earl of Yarborough, a pub and summer cafe.

Dimbola Museum presents the life and photography of Victorian celebrity Julia Margaret Cameron.

Dinosaur Isle is a family friendly museum where you can discover the dinosaurs living on the island 125 million years ago together with other local fossils, rocks and minerals.

Godshill Village has a range of craft shops, a charming church, the famous model village, and a number of cafés and tea gardens.

Isle of Wight Steam Railway. This preserved heritage railway is run by volunteers. Steam trains run during the summer and at Christmas. The Havenstreet centre has a shop and train museum.

Newtown Nature Reserve. A pleasant walk across fields and marshland to hides where you can view gulls, waders and other birds. The village's old town hall is managed by National Trust.

Shanklin Old Village and Chine. A charming collection of heritage buildings including thatched cottages, souvenir shops and tea gardens. You can pay to walk down Shanklin Chine to the sea.

St Catherine's Light House is located below Old Niton in a stunning natural setting among green fields with fine sea views. You may enjoy a drink, snack or meal at the nearby Castlehaven tea gardens, when open, or the Buddle Inn above.

Quarr Abbey. With a pleasant tea garden among its orchards. The old abbey buildings are in a field nearby and can be viewed from the coast path.

Tennyson Down. There are great views across the island and out to sea from the Tennyson Monument on the top of this chalk down. Tennyson himself claimed "the air is worth sixpence a pint". You can also walk along to the Needles and enjoy more views of the Solent.

Ventnor Botanic Garden benefits from a micro-climate with temperatures around 5° warmer than the rest of the island. There are exotic plants from Australia, Japan, the Mediterranean, New Zealand and South Africa, medicinal and desert gardens, and a tropical green house.

Yarmouth. This historic village has a range of interesting shops, cafés, pubs, restaurants, a castle, harbour, and swing bridge to enjoy.

Likewise, there are many places where you can eat and drink, so only a few are listed below.

Burrs Restaurant provides fine dining and friendly service in the old Bugle Tap, originally a hotel bar in a quiet Newport side street.

Chocolate Apocalypse specialises in chocolate drinks, cakes and sweets on the Ryde seafront.

Old Barracks Cafe. This is located in the Victorian Puckpool Fort, just inland from the coast path and sea wall, next to the children's play area.

Murray's Seafood Restaurant is near the Red Jet terminal on Cowes High Street.

Pedallers Café welcomes cyclists and walkers following the Red Squirrel cycle trail from Newport to Sandown.

Quay Arts Café is located in a restored warehouse building beside Newport harbour, with a small theatre, galleries, souvenir shop, and also hosts a number of music events.

Ristorante Michaelangelo features authentic Italian cuisine on the Ryde seafront.

Smugglers Haven Tea Gardens has impressive views out to sea over the Landslip. You can climb down the impressive Devil's Chimney from here to explore the atmospheric woodland.

Steephill Cove has a number of cafes and sea food restaurants during the summer months.

Valentinos features authentic Italian cuisine with friendly service in Carisbrooke High Street.

Wight Mouse Inn, near Chale Church, has a large pub garden with children's play area.

The most famous festivals on the island is the pop music festival which is currently held in the middle of June in Newport. The festival was originally held in 1968, 1969 and 1970, attended by increasing numbers. It has been estimated that the 1970 festival, held on Afton Down opposite Tapnell Farm, had an audience of over 600,000 people, although the organiser believes it was half that number. Famous artists such as Jimi Hendrix, Joni Mitchell, and Leonard Cohen performed as well as bands such as The Doors, The Who, and the Moody Blues. The event suffered from commercial and logistical problems and led to an act of Parliament which effectively banned further festivals.

The event was however revived in 2002, with the main stage in a Newport recreational ground beside the river Medina. It has been held annually since then, except for a gap in 2020 during the pandemic. Since 2005, audiences have been 50,000 or more. The festival currently runs from Thursday to Sunday night. Camp sites are set up in nearby fields, and the weekend festival ticket includes camping. The camp site is usually open from Thursday morning until Monday afternoon. Red Funnel offers special ferry tickets and there are also shuttle buses for festival goers.

Other music festivals include Jack Up the Summer, Rhythmtree, the Ventnor Fringe and Isle of Wight Proms. The Garlic Festival also runs during the summer. There is also a popular literary festival during the autumn. Many of the island's towns and villages hold carnivals: the one in Ryde is the oldest in the UK. Ryde also hosts the Island Pride event. Wolverton Manor hosts a garden fair and also a folk and blues fair.

Cowes Week has been running since 1826. Turner painted this event in 1827. The regatta usually takes place in August and features 40 races a day, 500 boats, and 2,500 sailors. Even if you are not an enthusiast, the yachts and their colourful sails provide a fantastic spectacle between Cowes and Calshot. The Round the Island Race was first held in 1931. The course starts and ends in Cowes. This event, usually held in June, typically attracts over 1,000 boats and around 10,000 sailors. Vantage points include the Needles (from 7:30 to 10am), Chilton Chine, St Catherine's Point, Ventnor or Bonchurch, Culver Down, Ryde Pier, or the finish at Cowes (from 9:30am to 10pm).

The International Scooter Rally typically takes place during a weekend in August at Sandown Airport which provides food, drinks, camping and music. There is a ride-out on Sunday. Ryde typically hosts a Classic Car Extravaganza in September. Cars gather along the Esplanade and can be viewed for free by other car owners, hobbyists, and passers by. The Isle of Wight Steam Railway organises a programme of events such as an Easter egg hunt, real ale, Steam Fair, Wizard Week, and an opportunity to Race the Train along a 5 kilometre course parallel to the railway line.

Walking on the Wight

With so much open, green space, and 500 miles of public paths, including a 70 mile coast path, the island is a haven for walkers. This guide describes some shorter and some longer walks you might follow. To get the best out of your walk it is wise to take along the Ordnance Survey map OL29; this covers the whole island at a scale of 25,000:1, which is 4 centimetres per kilometre. You should also check the weather forecast and wear appropriate footwear. Paths can be muddy after rain. You usually pass a cafe or pub for a drink or snack, but it is best to take some water and food with you, just in case. It is also wise to take a bus timetable, or a device you can use to access the bus timetable online, in case bad weather cuts your walk short, or you change your plans.

Note that some parts of the island have experienced subsidence. The Landslip between Bonchurch and Luccombe, for example, covers 70 acres and was created by soil movement during the 1810s, destroying the coast road, which was then re-routed. The road from Old Niton to Blackgang suffered a similar fate in 1928. The road between Freshwater Bay and Compton Bay has also been re-routed following coastal erosion. The Appley steps in Ventnor are currently closed as a precaution due to instability of the cliff. A map is useful in case of an unexpected diversion.

There is a walking festival on the island, usually a week in the spring. Though you can follow public paths at any time, guided and organised routes may encourage you to try out new walks. A highlight of the festival is the charity walk to support the island's Mountbatten Hospice. Up to 10,000 walkers take part, and you can choose to walk the island from east to west, or one of three shorter routes. Buses are laid on to take you to the start, so you don't need to worry your return journey. Refreshment stations and entertainment are provided at key points along your way.

A list of short walks is given below. There are of, course, many others. The ones here are chosen because they start and end in a convenient location, feature interesting sights, or have fine views.

There is also a list of longer walking trails, including the coast path. It is not necessary, however, to complete one of these in a single attempt. Depending on your walking speed, you may break a trail into smaller sections, and complete it over several days, or just the parts which appeal to you.

In many cases, you will finish your walk somewhere different from where you started. Fortunately the island has a good bus network, and you can plan to start and end near a convenient bus stop. Alternatively, you may need to or choose to take a taxi to get you back again. In this case it is recommended to phone the taxi before you have finished your walk, so you do not have to wait too long. Note that between Chale and Brook the "back of the wight", or south-west coast, has no bus service during the winter, and only a limited service during the summer. You could take a taxi, or walk inland to connect with the service running via Mottistone, Brighstone and Shorwell.

Shorter Walks

From the centre of Ryde you can follow the coast path east toward Puckpool, Seaview, Seagrove, Priory Bay and St Helen's Duver, where the tower is all that remains of St Helens Old Church, and

the sandy heath was once a royal golf course. The most uplifting route follows the beach. Note however that this is only possible at low tide, so you should check the Priory Bay tide times before setting off. From the Duver you can cross the causeway to the south west corner of Bembridge Harbour, where you can catch a bus outside the old railway station, at the bottom of station road.

Starting at Ryde Golf Course you can follow the coast path via the Ladies Walk to Binstead Church, Quarr Abbey and Fishbourne. The Church dates back to the 11th century but was re-built and enlarged in the 1800s. Quarr Abbey was founded in 1132 and dissolved in 1536. It was re-established in 1907 on a site slightly to the west of the original one. The coast path takes you from Fishbourne to Kites Hill in Wootton, where you can catch a bus.

You can walk along the old railway line from Cowes to Newport. Toward the end of this route you can follow a footpath to the left to the Medina River, just after the Vestas wind turbine factory, and before the bridge over the mill pond. From here follow Dodnor Lane, and the footpath along the river's edge, which takes you to Little London in Newport, and a bus service back to Cowes.

You can also walk along the other bank of the river. From the junction of Sea Street and Quay Street follow the Quay to the Premier Inn and Seaclose Park. There is a public footpath from the north west corner of the park which takes you to the Island Harbour Marina, which has a bar café. If the ground is firm you can cross the lock gate entrance to the marina, and continue along the water's edge to the Folly Inn. You can walk away from the river from the Marina or the Folly Inn to find a bus stop when you reach the main road in Binfield or Whippingham, respectively. Alternatively you might simply retrace your steps back the way you came along this green route.

There is also a walk along the old railway line between Yarmouth and Freshwater. Each end has a café on the site of the former railway station. You can continue to Freshwater Bay via the Afton Marsh Nature Reserve, crossing Blackbridge Road. Alternatively you can walk back along the other side of the Western Yar river via the Freshwater Way. For example, you can follow the Causeway directly to Freshwater Church, then pick up Freshwater Way there. From the old railway station at Yarmouth you can follow the river back to swing bridge and harbour. Alternatively, you can follow the old railway through the marsh to reach Thorley, then join the sea wall which gets you back to Yarmouth. There are good bus services near all of these points.

The cycle route from Newport to Sandown mainly follows the old railway line. This is a good walk, 8 miles in all, and very flat. This is off road, except for a short walk to Sandown Railway station. There are good bus services at each end. The cycle route continues down to the sea, along the Sandown Bay seafront to Shanklin, then back along the old railway line to Wroxall, before looping back to the original route via Godshill and East Lane.

From Cowes you can follow Egypt Esplanade, opened in 1894, to reach Gurnard. You pass Egypt Point, favoured by Queen Victoria, the most northerly point on the island. You pass the house where Winston Churchill's parents met, and the Royal Yacht Squadron building (Cowes Castle). There is only a limited bus service at Gurnard, so it is best to walk back again the same way.

You can walk along the sea wall from the bottom of Widdick Chine in Totton and its old lifeboat station. The section of wall between Totland and Colwell Bay was destroyed by a land slide, but you can walk over the remains of this to reach Colwell Bay, and continue along the sea wall, past the cafés at Colwell Chine. At low tide you can continue along the beach from here to Brambles Chine, and then rejoin the coast path. This takes you through the Brambles Chine holiday village to Linstone Chine at the end of Monks Lane, where you turn right to reach Fort Victoria Country Park. Follow the woods down to Fort Victoria. There is a summer bus service here, or it is only a short distance along the coast path to reach the swing bridge over the Yar and Yarmouth Harbour.

Ventnor enjoys a hilly setting by the sea. You can get a feeling for the challenges of living here by taking a short walk starting at the bus stop near Boots, then following Church Street up the hill then turning left into Belgrave Road at the corner. Continue to the Royal Hotel at the end and turn left down Bath Road. When you reach the Spy Glass Inn and the seafront continue along the Esplanade, and climb up the footpath past the Cascades and the Winter Gardens. Finally, continue along Pier Street which takes you back to the start of your walk.

You can also take a more challenging walk from the same starting point. Walk up Tulse Hill and Southgrove Road to reach the old railway station. Follow the footpath from here through the wood and fields up to the top of St Boniface Down, 241 metres above sea level, the island's highest point. Continue north until you reach the path which takes you down Nansen Hill to Leeson Road. Follow this road to the Bonchurch Chimney Steps and take these down to The Pitts. Follow this road to the lower stretch of the Chimney Steps and take these to reach Bonchurch Village Road. Turn left, go past the pond, then continue along the village road as this descends to St Boniface chapel. Follow the path to the right through the woods, over the stream and behind a terrace of seaside villas to reach the sea wall, which takes you back to Ventnor Esplanade.

Longer Walking Trails

The Ordnance Survey walking map OL29 shows 10 longer trails. The longest of these is the coast path, which goes all round the island, and is covered in the next section. The other nine are:

Bembridge Trail: Bembridge to Newport, 11 miles, via Brading and Arreton [»»»]

Freshwater Way: Yarmouth to Freshwater Bay, 5 miles, via Freshwater All Saints Church [»»»]

Hamstead Trail: from Hamstead to Brook, 7 miles, via Ningwood, Wellow and Shalcombe [»»»]

Nunwell Trail: from Sandown to Ryde, 7 miles, via Alverstone, Nunwell and Smallbrook [»»»]

Shepherds Trail: from Newport to Shepherds Chine, 7 miles, via Chillerton [»»»]

Stenbury Trail: from Newport to Ventnor, 10 miles, via Blackwater and Godshill [»»»]

Tennyson Trail: from Alum Bay to Newport, 14 miles, via Freshwater Bay & Brighstone Forest [»»»]

Worsley Trail: from Brighstone Forest to Shanklin, 13 miles, via Shorwell and Wroxall [»»»]

Yar River Trail: from Niton to St Helens, 19 miles, via Godshill, Newchurch and Brading [»»»]

Some of these trails can be combined to create longer walks. The longest Walk the Wight route (26 miles), for example, basically follows the Bembridge Trail followed by the Tennyson Trail. A popular West Wight route takes you from Yarmouth to Freshwater Bay along the old railway line and across Afton Marsh, then returns to Yarmouth via the coast path, passing the Needles, Alum Bay, Totland Bay, Colwell Bay, and Fort Victoria, a total of around 12 miles. A shorter version of this route is the Robert Hooke Trail (8.5 miles), which celebrates an island-born genius [»»»].

Isle of Wight Coast Path

The coast path circles the island, mainly on public footpaths, but with some stretches along quiet coastal roads. Some of the route is flat, but other sections require climbing. Walking at 3 miles per hour, say, the whole path would take a total of 23 hours to walk. There are opportunities to complete the route in a single day, for example as an Ultra Challenge. Most people, however, will spread their walking over several days: for example, 10 miles per day over a week.

The section from Yarmouth to Thorness Bay and the section from East Cowes to Wootton both take you some distance from the coast, and are mainly along roads. Omitting these gives 4, 5 or 6 days of walking. You can also walk the section from Cowes to Thorness Bay (4 miles) to give an extra day. Note however that there is no bus service to Thorness Bay, so you will either need to take a taxi, or walk back the way you came.

For the most picturesque coastal walking, you could start at the Fishbourne ferry terminal and walk in a clockwise direction to the Yarmouth ferry terminal, or vice versa. You can stay in a central location such as Newport, which direct bus connections to most places on the route. From the relatively uninhabited Back of the Wight you can reach Brighstone by walking inland for a mile or so, to catch the number 12 bus to Newport. If you plan to stay on the path, you should consider booking your accommodation in advance. Overnight accommodation is available at Freshwater Bay, Totland and Colwell, Yarmouth, Cowes and East Cowes, Ryde, Bembridge, Sandown, Shanklin, Ventnor, Chale and Brighstone, allowing you to choose how far to walk each day. Remember that you will be able to enjoy some great views, and places to visit, so allow time for stops. Attractions on or near the route include Ryde Pier, Puckpool Fort, the Isle of Wight Gin Distillery, Wildheart Animal Sanctuary, Dinosaur Isle Museum, Sandown Pier, Shanklin Old Village and Chine, Ventnor Botanic Garden, St Catherine's Oratory and Light House, Blackgang Chine, Isle of Wight Pearl, Dimbola Museum and Galleries, The Needles, Alum Bay, Fort Victoria, Yarmouth Castle, and Newtown Nature Reserve.

In a few places the official path diverts inland, but you may be able to continue along the beach. Walking beside the water is a feature of a coastal path. On the other hand, you don't want to be walking *in* the water, so check the tide times for the following beaches before setting off: Seaview & Seagrove, Priory Bay, Bembridge Lifeboat, Brook Beach, Compton Bay, and Colwell Bay.

The ground is often muddier in the winter, and there are fewer buses to rescue you if the weather turns bad, so it is best to choose the spring, summer or autumn for your coastal adventure.

Island History

Geography

A line of chalk hills and cliffs runs between the Needles and Culver Down at the western and eastern ends of the island, backed by some limestone. A second area of chalk gives rise to more hills and cliffs near Ventnor in the south east. Between these areas of chalk, and to the north, are softer rocks such as sandstones and clays, which create lower sea cliffs, and farmland in the centre and north of the island. Sea level rise has enlarged river estuaries, creating "drowned valleys", in particular the Eastern Yar between Bembridge and Brading, the Medina between Cowes and Newport, and the Western Yar between Yarmouth and Freshwater. Two other natural harbours, fed by smaller creeks, are Fishbourne and Newtown. The Solent and Southampton Water are also drowned river valleys. The north of the island thus benefits from five natural sheltered harbours suitable for pleasure boats and smaller ships. Historically these have been the most populated areas, together with the town and nearby villages protected by the fortifications at Carisbrooke.

On the south of the island the hills are closer to the sea, the English Channel, so water run-off forms streams rather than rivers. In several places particularly where the rock is softer, these streams create small ravines, known locally as chines. A few smaller communities were established where bays and coves provided some shelter and allowed fishing boats to be hauled out of the water. In the central and northern farmlands manors and villages were established for those working the land, or in related occupations.

The south east coast shares geology with the Jurassic coast round Lyme Regis, and a number of dinosaur fossils have been in and under the cliffs there. Some parts of the island are vulnerable to land slips or coastal erosion. All major coastal settlements are protected by sea walls.

By the time of the first Ordnance Survey map in 1793-4, the island still only had six towns: Yarmouth, Cowes, East Cowes, Carisbrooke (rather than Newport), Binstead (rather than Ryde) and Brading. Its population was still mostly scattered across the island in villages and hamlets. In the 1801 census, the population of the whole island was less than live in Newport today.

The island is around 381 square kilometre in area. The current population density is around 370 people per square kilometre. This is considerably lower than the next largest island off England: Portsea, occupied by Portsmouth and Southsea, has a similar population on an area of just 24 square kilometres, giving a density of around 6,100 people per square kilometre. Historically, the island's population has grown steadily, with the highest growth during the 1800s:

1377: 4,733; 1559: 8,767; 1771: 18,700; 1801: 23,687; 1851: 43,640; 1911: 88,200; 1991: 126,300

Early and Pre-history

A variety of stone age tools have been discovered on the island, some of which may be 400,000 years old. The Longstone at Mottistone may have originally marked the entrance to a stone age long barrow or burial mound. There are notable barrows on Ashey Down, Brook Down, Headon Warren, and the top of Mottistone Down. An iron age wooden track has been discovered at

Alverstone, crossing an area of marshland. This was later re-used and built over by both the Romans and the Saxons. A site where wooden boats were built around 7000 years ago has been discovered under the sea near Bouldnor. The popularity of metal detecting combined with the amount of green space available may explain why a high density of hoards from the iron age or later have been found on the island, containing coins, jewellery and other metal artefacts.

The Romans arrived in the region around 43 AD, and seem to have used the island for agricultural purposes, perhaps to supply Chichester. By 400 AD, half the island's woods had been cleared. A number of their villas have been found, two of which open to the public, in Brading and Newport. The Romans also quarried stone at Binstead.

The Anglo-Saxon chronicle records struggles for control of the island between Jutes, South Saxons and West Saxons. It was part of Wessex by around 680. Starting in the late 800s, Vikings raided the island and may also have used it as a safe base, for example overwintering here. The Saxons established a fort called Wihtgarsburh where they could retreat and defend themselves. (Wiht was the name of one of the island's kings during this period.) Viking raids came to an end following the Norman conquest in 1066.

Norman and Medieval History

The Normans built a castle at Carisbrooke. Excavations suggest this was the site of an earlier fortification, most likely Saxon and hence possibly Wihtgarsburh. William the Conqueror appointed his relative William FitzOsbern as lord of the island, a role which was passed to the de Redvers family by Henry I in 1100, who retained control for around 200 years, before passing to Isabella de Fortibus, and back to the crown on her death in 1293. Several Isle of Wight manors were originally Saxon, although all have been rebuilt, possibly multiple times.

The island was originally divided into 8 parishes, each running across the island from the north coast to the south: Freshwater, Shalfleet, Calbourne, Carisbrooke, Arreton, Godshill, Newchurch, Brading. Over time, these were divided into smaller parishes, as more churches were established, nominally subsidiary to their original "mother church". Church buildings surviving from Norman times include Yaverland Church, St Boniface Chapel in Bonchurch, and parts of Binstead Church.

Quarr Abbey was founded in 1132, and Carisbrooke Priory in 1156. Agricultural workers owed a tenth of their produce to the church, or the lord of the manor who controlled the church. This was called a tithe, and was not a convenient form of taxation for subsistence farmers to pay. It is not easy to divide one, two or three new calves or lambs into ten. Likewise measuring the exact amount of hay or corn produced can be problematic. Over time, these tithes were "commuted" meaning that a monetary payment was substituted, thereby avoiding the need to monitor production, and the on-going disputes.

Lyre Abbey, in Normandy, was founded by FitzOsbern in 1046. This was a popular arrangment, as the monks were supposed to pray for the soul of the founder. While he was lord of the island, he granted the tithes from Freshwater, Niton, Whippingham, Arreton, Godshill and Newchurch to

Lyre. Carisbrooke Priory was later added. Lyre's tithes were commuted by Baldwin de Redvers to £50 per year. This payment was diverted by Henry V to the Charterhouse at Sheen (Richmond). Quarr Abbey was dissolved by Henry VIII in 1536. In some cases, tithes were then payable to the lord of the manor who bought up the abbey/monastery/priory and its lands, so this form of taxation continued to generate legal disputes until it was finally abolished by the Tithe Act of 1836.

Newport was laid out on a grid system in the late 1100s, and Newtown in the 1200s. Newtown was, however, sacked by the French in 1377, and never recovered. Newport remained subsidiary to Carisbrooke until the 1800s, but has grown and become the island's administrative capital. It still has a West, South and East Street, which indicate its original extent. North Street was renamed Crocker Street after the potters who worked there.

Originally, the harbour was south-east of Yarmouth, in the village of Thorley, which had its own manor at the time of Edward the Confessor. Likewise the sea came inland past Bembridge all the way to Brading, which presumably explains why the Romans built their villa there. Thorley Haven and Brading Haven, however, fell out of use by the 1600s, in both cases due to silting up.

A Spanish ship carrying wine was wrecked off Chale Bay in 1313 and plundered by local landowners. In penance, a medieval lighthouse called St Catherine's Oratory was built by the lord of Chale, the only remaining one in Britain, in use until the later lighthouse built in 1838. A Spanish fleet from Castile sacked the island in 1374.

During the 100 years war, the island was raided repeatedly by the French. In 1377 several towns were burned, including Newtown. The French forces laid siege to Carisbrooke Castle but retreated when their commander was killed using a "silver bow". It is claimed that the French dead were piled up at Nodes Hill (Noddy = Body) in Newport. Four further raids occurred during the war.

Henry VIII later improved the defences of the Solent by building several forts, including castles at Cowes, Sandown, Hurst spit, and Southsea. These defences were tested during the Battle of the Solent in 1545. The English fleet held the French fleet at bay off Portsmouth, although the Henry's flagship Mary Rose was lost. The French however invaded the Isle of Wight, landing at Bonchurch, and also at Bembridge, Sandown, and St Helens. French soldiers fought against local militia. Casualties on both sides were heavy, and the French were defeated, or at least decided to withdraw. Yarmouth Castle was built after the battle and completed in 1547.

The Isle of Wight During the 1600 and 1700s

Charles I generated unrest by imposing taxes without parliamentary approval and his religious policies. This led to Civil War, in which Charles' royalist supporters were defeated by the parliamentarians and their new model army. Charles was imprisoned in Hampton Court, but fled via Titchfield to the Isle of Wight, where he was imprisoned again in Carisbrooke Castle from 1647 to 1648. During this period, negotiations continued between Charles and Parliament, and Charles was allowed for a time to lodge in Newport to finalise the so-called "Treaty of Newport". By December, however, but the Army lost patience with the lack of progress. Charles was imprisoned

again and moved off the island to Hurst Castle, and then to Windsor, before his execution in Whitehall in January 1949. While in Carisbrooke Castle, Charles made two unsuccessful attempts to escape, in March and May 1648. The first of these required Charles to climb out of a window and lower himself to the unguarded courtyard below. Charles, however, was unable to get through the bars in the window. For the second attempt, nitric acid and a hacksaw were smuggled in to Charles. This time, however, his captors were aware of the plan and interrupted him while he was trying to remove the window bar.

Robert Hooke was born in Freshwater in 1635. His father, was curate of All Saints Church, but died in 1648, leaving Robert £40. He took this to London, and studied at Westminster School, then Christ Church, Oxford, where he was employed as Boyle's assistant working on an air pump. He also met Christopher Wren. He was one of the founders of the Royal Society, and became Curator of Experiments in 1692. Hooke's many achievements include building a telescope and observing planetary rotation, building a microscope and observing cells, which he named in his book Micrographia, observing refraction and developing a wave theory of light. He also studied heat, geology and palaeontology, and carried out pioneering work surveying and map-making. He was granted a large number of patents during his lifetime, but much of his work was only published after his death. As Surveyor to the City of London, he helped Wren rebuild the city after the Great Fire of 1666. The circular Robert Hooke walking trail allows you to visit relevant points in Yarmouth and Freshwater, and provides further insight into his life and achievements.

Workhouses were established in Northwood by 1728 and by 1729 in Brighstone and Newport. In the 1770s a new House of Industry was built to the north of Newport on a site now occupied by St Mary's hospital. In 1781 Sir Richard Worsley, one of the founders of this new workhouse, published a History of the Isle of Wight, using notes from his father and grandfather. In 1782 Sir Richard sued his wife Seymour Fleming for adultery. It transpired however that he had encouraged this liaison by allowing her lover to view her naked in a bath house. The jury awarded just one shilling of damages rather than the £20,000 Sir Richard had requested. Both Seymour Fleming and Sir Richard moved abroad to escape this scandal, to France and Italy respectively.

It is claimed that many of island residents were involved in smuggling in the 1700s. William Arnold was appointed as Customs Collector at Cowes in 1777. He used his own money to buy a cutter called the Swan to combat smugglers. Whippingham Church has tablet in his memory. Thomas Sivell was caught smuggling and shot by revenue officers in 1785; he is buried in Binstead Church.

Turner visited the Isle of Wight in 1795. A year later he exhibited his first oil painting at the Royal Academy, called Fishermen At Sea, featuring their moonlit fishing boat at sea off the Needles.

Further Reading

Useful sources include Wikipedia↗, Wightpedia↗ and The Isle of Wight History Group↗ web site
Alverstone Marshes Causeway Track↗ Ancient Barrows and Burial Mounds↗
Stone Age Boat Building Site↗ Tithes on the Isle of Wight↗ Smuggling on the island↗

Isle of Wight History from 1800 to the present

During the French Revolution and Napoleonic Wars, travel to the continent was difficult. A number of books on the island were published at the turn of the century, some promoting the island's scenic beauty. In 1812 a report on the *Medicinal Effects of a Chalybeate Spring* near the Royal Sandrock Hotel encouraged health tourists to visit Niton Undercliff. In 1821 local printer George Brannon published the first edition of *Vectis Scenery*, a series of his engravings. His son Philip also contributed some engravings to later editions.

John Nash, the famous architect, bought an estate in East Cowes. He constructed East Cowes Castle, completed in 1800, to his own design. He also designed other island buildings such as Newport Town Hall and Northwood in Cowes. During the Regency, Nash enjoyed royal favour and entertained the Prince Regent at East Cowes, as well as other member of the aristocracy. Turner also visited and painted the interior of Nash's Castle, Carisbrooke Castle, and Cowes Regatta.

Ventnor had been a small fishing village with fewer than 100 residents in 1810, but in 1820 John Hamborough bought two local manors, and in the 1830s Sir James Clark promoted the health benefits of its climate, attracting large number of visitors and residents. The promenade was completed in 1848 and by 1850 the population was 3,000. In 1869 Dr Hassall opened a hospital for diseases of the chest, which later became a Royal National Hospital, and now the botanic gardens.

The Coastguard service was set up in 1822. Coastguard houses were subsequently built in over 20 coastal locations. Thanks to these, and improved patrols at sea, smuggling gradually declined. A continuing problem, however, was the number of ships wrecked off the island, and the number of lives lost. Lifeboat stations were established starting in the 1860s, for example in Brook.

Valentine Gray was born in Gosport in 1812 but his mother died 6 months later and he was left in the care of the workhouse. In 1821 he was apprenticed as a chimney sweep in Newport. Just 3 months later he died, and an autopsy found that the cause of death was a severe blow to the head. In addition, his body was covered by bruises, sores and wounds, no doubt caused by having to squeeze up chimneys as little as 12 inches wide, naked. His master was found guilty of manslaughter. An Act of Parliament in 1834 required chimney sweeps to be at least 14 years old.

During the 1800s and 1900s employment in tourism and also manufacturing increased. Local firms specialised in, for example, brewing, brick making, concrete manufacture, ship building, and lace making. Isle of Wight Industry is covered in a separate document.

Rev James White's wife Rosa inherited Bonchurch Manor and he obtained parliamentary permission to develop the estate, which was broken and up and sold for development in 1836. In 1837 Admiral Swinburne leased East Dene and his son Algernon, a famous and controversial poet, grew up there, and is buried in the nearby church. Westfield was built for Queen Adelaide in the 1840s. Bonchurch developed into a fashionable centre for writers such as Charles Dickens, who stayed at Winterbourne with his family in the summer of 1849, while writing *David Copperfield*.

In 1813 an act of Parliament noted that “roads and highways in the Isle of Wight are in many parts in very bad condition”. In 1814 toll gates were installed in ten locations across the island so that road users pay for their maintenance rather than the parishes they passed through. In 1889 however county councils were given responsibility for roads and the toll gates (now 27 of them) fell out of use. In the 1860s the Military Road was built along the Back of the Wight between Chale and Freshwater Bay so defence forces could reach the site of any invasion more quickly. This was later adopted for civilian use and forms the A3055 coast road between those villages today.

Initially visitors would typically cross the Solent on a rowing or sailing boat. Disembarking at low tide in Ryde was inconvenient until in 1814 Ryde’s first pier was built. Steam-powered paddle boats started operating. In the 1820s the first scheduled services commenced from Cowes and Ryde. More piers were built: in Ventnor (1860), Yarmouth (1875), Sandown (1878), Seaview (1881), and Shanklin (1891). The first railway line opened in 1862, between Newport and Cowes, and in 1864 between Ryde and Shanklin, then in 1866 reached Ventnor. A special service called the Invalid Express took sufferers of tuberculosis (TB) non-stop from Ryde to Ventnor.

Queen Victoria and Prince Albert chose the Isle of Wight as the location for a summer house and to bring up their children. Victoria had stayed in Norris Castle as a child. In 1845 Victoria bought Osborne Estate and demolished the existing house. Prince Albert designed a new house, which was completed in 1851. Their estate included a private beach where the family could bathe, and a cottage brought over from Switzerland for their children. Victoria died here in 1901.

Alfred, Lord Tennyson, poet laureate, was also attracted by the idea of peaceful country living. In 1853 he stayed with his family at Farringford between Freshwater Bay and Alum Bay, and bought this in 1856. Other writers such as Lewis Carroll, Edward Lear, and Longfellow visited. Sadly his fame brought also many fans to this part of the West Wight, who lined up to see him. In 1869 he therefore bought another house in West Sussex, but continued to spend winters in Farringford.

Another of Tennyson’s visitors was Julia Margaret Cameron. She was born in India and her husband owned plantations in Ceylon / Sri Lanka. In 1845 they settled in England where Julia’s sister Sara introduced her to a number of famous artists and writers. In 1860 Julia visited Tennyson and was inspired to buy a pair of cottages in Freshwater Bay, which she joined into a single house which she named Dimbola after the village near their plantations. Julia had been made aware of the invention of photography by her friend, the astronomer Herschel, and started making photographs of her own. In 1863 her daughter and son in law gave her a sliding-box camera, and she converted a chicken coop to a studio and a coal cellar to a dark room. She photographed a range of subjects, including Tennyson and his famous visitors, children of her friends, and tableaux imitating romantic paintings. It is largely thanks to her that we have photographs of Tennyson, Longfellow, Darwin (who stayed near the Camerons in 1868), Alice Liddell, and actress Ellen Terry.

In 1860 the Royal Commission for the Defence of the UK recommended the construction of new fortifications to protect against possible invasion by the French. Lord Palmerston was prime minister at the time and these defences became known as Palmerston Forts, or even Palmerston

Follies, since no French invasion actually happened. By 1870 around 14 new forts had been completed on the western and eastern ends of the island to guard the approaches to the Solent. Four forts were also built in the Solent between the island and Portsmouth in case land-based artillery could not reach ships in the middle of these waters.

In 1876 John Milne was recruited as foreign adviser to the Japanese government and appointed as professor of mining and geology at the Imperial College of Engineering in Tokyo. In 1880 Milne invented the horizontal pendulum seismograph and co-founded the Seismological Society of Japan. In 1895 Milne retired and moved to Shide on the Isle of Wight with his Japanese wife where he continued his work on earthquakes for the next 20 years. In 1898 he published *Earthquakes and Other Earth Movements.* He was also a prominent founder member of Newport Golf Club.

In 1890, the Isle of Wight separated from Hampshire to become its own administrative county.

In 1897 Guglielmo Marconi established himself at the Royal Needles Hotel and for the next two and a half year worked there to develop wireless radio, setting up the first permanent wireless station. Ships as far as 64 kilometres away received these transmissions. In 1900 Marconi moved this station to Knowles Farm in Niton where he was able to tune transmissions to different wavelengths to avoid interference. In 1901 transmissions from Knowles Farm were picked up by a station in Cornwall, a distance of 299 kilometres.

The Needles was the site of one of the island's Palmerston Forts. The original or Old Battery was completed in 1863. Improvements continued: a ditch was cut into the chalk to protect against attacks from land, the New Battery was completed in 1895, a tunnel and elevator gave access to the beach below, and searchlights were installed in 1899. Despite these defences a German submarine sunk two ships off the Needles in 1917, during World War I. In World War II anti-aircraft guns were installed and trialled at the Needles. The cliffs were also used for training soldiers prior to the D-Day landings. The site was used from 1955 to 1971 to develop and test space rockets including the Black Knight and the Black Arrow. In 1971 the Black Arrow was used to launch the Prospero satellite into space, but from Woomera in Australia, not from the Needles.

An early radar station was constructed on the downs above Ventnor in 1937. It was damaged by an air raid in 1940 but remained operating as a mobile unit until the main station was repaired.

Car ferry Wootton was one of the civilian boats which helped to evacuate troops from Dunkirk at the start of World War II. At its end, three paddle steam ferries, HMS Ryde, HMS Sandown, and HMS Whippingham helped protect the Mulberry Harbours landed in France during D-Day.

During the Battle of Britain ace flying officer John Dundas crashed into the sea during an engagement off the Isle of Wight. One of the Spitfires he flew, R6915, has been preserved at the Imperial Air Museum and he is remember by a memorial at Freshwater Bay.

The Polish destroyer ORP Błyskawica was built in J S White of Cowes on the Isle of Wight and launched in 1936. She escaped from Poland just before Germany invaded and served with British forces during World War II. In 1942 she returned to J S White's shipyard for an emergency refit. On 4th May German fighter bombers attacked Cowes and East Cowes for two hours, followed by a second wave just after midnight. Captain Francki and his crew set up a smoke screen and used the Błyskawica's guns to force the bombers away from their targets. Free French naval units at Martin's Yard also used small calibre weapons to deter the attack. Crew from the Błyskawica helped local services to fight fires in the dock yards and town. Over 70 residents were killed but no doubt the toll would have been higher without the impromptu air defences supplied by the Błyskawica.

In 1943 decoy sites were set up in the marshes around Newtown to simulate port activity for Operations Starkey and Fortitude. The metal hut at Newtown harbour may be a remnant of these.

Operation PLUTO was a scheme to pump fuel across the English Channel after D-Day using a floating pipeline. Fort Granite in Sandown was used to house sixteen pumps each of which supplied 1000 barrels per day. A PLUTO pipeline also ran down Shanklin Chine out to sea.

In 1778 a military hospital was established on the edge of Parkhurst forest and in 1798 military barracks were opened there also. By 1838 the hospital had become a children's prison, and between 1842 and 1852 around 1,500 boys were transported to Australia and New Zealand. In 1863 Parkhurst became a prison for young male offenders. Camp Hill prison was built in 1912 using labour from Parkhurst Prison and in 1967 Albany prison opened on the site of the former Albany barracks. Camp Hill housed for category C offenders, whereas Albany housed category A offenders from 1970. These 3 neighbouring prisons were merged into HM Prison Isle of Wight in 2009, and now house category B sex offenders and vulnerable prisoners. Camp Hill closed in 2013.

The Royal Isle of Wight Infirmary opened in Ryde in 1849 "*for the relief of the sick and disabled poor*" and closed in 1992. The Whitecroft mental asylum (hospital) opened in 1896 near Gatcombe also closed in 1992. From 1903 to 2002 the Grade II listed Frank James Memorial Home was a hospital in East Cowes. St Mary's Hospital opened in 2001 near the site of the former Newport workhouse. St Mary's also has a helicopter link to Southampton and Portsmouth.

Further Reading

Useful sources include Wikipedia↗, Wightpedia↗ and The Isle of Wight History Group↗ web site

Vectis Scenery↗
Valentine Gray↗
Back of the Wight Wrecks↗
Tollgates on the Island↗
History of the Needles↗
Attack on Cowes↗
Isle of Wight Hospitals↗
Literary Trails on the Wight↗
Farringford↗
Brook Lifeboat Station↗
Ventnor Royal National Hospital↗
Marconi on the Island↗
Ferries in World War II↗
Isle of Wight Workhouses↗
Julia Margaret Cameron↗
Shipwrecks and Lifeboats↗
Victorian Ventnor↗
Milne Walking Trail
Isle of Wight Prisons↗
Isle of Wight Railways↗

Forts and Castles on the Isle of Wight

This section lists some of the fortifications on the island and provides sources for further reading.

There is an Iron Age earthwork rampart at Chillerton Down, suggesting that a fort was started here. It was not completed, however, so the earliest fortification on the island appears to be the Saxon stronghold, Wihtgarsburh. This was most likely located at the site of Carisbrooke Castle, where Anglo-Saxon graves have been discovered, and there are remains of an enclosure wall visible in the ditch to the west of the castle entrance.

The Normans began their Carisbrooke Castle by digging ditches within the Saxon burh to create a defensive enclosure. In the early 1100s, a motte and bailey was constructed, the square keep on top of a hill which is still the core of the castle today. Stone walls were added on top of the embankment, as well as a castle chapel. The lordship of the island passed to the de Redvers family after the second incumbent took part in a revolt against William the Conqueror.

Isabella de Fortibus was the 9th member of the de Redvers family to hold the lordship, which she inherited after her brother died in 1262 without heirs. She also inherited from her brother land and an earldom in Devon. She had already inherited land in Yorkshire and Cumberland from her husband who had died in 1260. She was then one of the richest woman in England, with a variety of titles such as Countess of Devon and Lady of the Isle. She refused to marry Simon de Montfort and also the Earl of Lancaster, despite each of them obtaining royal approval to do so. Instead she lived mainly at Carisbrooke Castle, and was able to increase her income from her estates by over 50% during the 1260s. She employed a chamberlain to manage her estates and advisers to help with a large number of legal cases she became involved in. She built the great hall, together with a private chapel at one end and a great chamber, including a glazed window, at the other. She also created the central courtyard with its surrounding buildings.

King Edward I was keen to acquire her estates and succeeded in taking possession of her northern territories via an intermediary who falsely claimed to be a family heir. She twice refused to sell her southern possessions, and in 1281 successfully defended herself against a legal challenge in an Isle of Wight court. In 1293, however, Isabella fell ill and on her deathbed sold the island to the King.

After Isabella, lordship of the island was an appointed position, rather than hereditary. Ten lords were appointed until 1488. The gateway tower was added in by the last of these. Following that, governors were appointed, with the last one, David Seely, 4th Baron Mottistone, serving until 1995. Modern roles such as High Sheriff and Lord Lieutenant are honorary ceremonial positions.

George Carey, cousin to Queen Elizabeth, was appointed governor and captain of the island in 1583. He rebuilt the castle's domestic buildings, added a second storey to the hall and chapel, and created a new block, Carey's mansion, next to the hall. England was in conflict or at war with Spain during this period. Carey therefore extended the defences in 1587 and in 1596 started construction of a long rampart with 5 bastions, completed in 1602. This was funded with contributions from the local gentry, who were unhappy about this. Ironically, these defences were

never used in war. Indeed, later alterations and improvements were made only to the domestic buildings within the walls, and the defences therefore remain much as there were in Carey's time.

Carisbrooke is located centrally, making it a good location to govern and control the island. It is also useful as a defensive structure where local forces can retreat in case of an invasion. In 1377, French raiders attacked Newtown and Yarmouth, and sent a force to lay siege to Carisbrooke Castle. A local knight, Peter de Heyno, took his "silver bow" and shot the French commander, knocking him off his horse, using an arrow slit still called Heyno's loop. The English forces then rushed out of the castle and overwhelmed the French. After this, the remaining French withdrew. Newtown never recovered after this, as it was too difficult to defend, and Newport overtook it.

In 1539, fearing invasion from France and Spain, Henry VIII ordered Parliament to begin a programme of work, or device, to defend the coast. Between 1539 and 1547 over 30 "device forts" were built, including Sharpenrode, Yarmouth, Cowes, East Cowes, St Helens, and Sandown. The fort at Sharpenrode was later rebuilt as Fort Victoria. St Helens was probably also built over later. East Cowes and Sandown Castles were affected by coastal erosion and demolished. Yarmouth Castle is managed by English Heritage and can still be visited. Cowes Castle became the Royal Yacht Squadron clubhouse in 1854, but was used for as a D-Day headquarters during World War II. You pass this building when walking along the sea-front at Cowes.

Yarmouth Castle was started after the Battle of the Solent showed that the island was vulnerable to invasion. It was built on the east side of the entrance to Thorley Haven / Yarmouth Harbour. Yarmouth was further fortified in the 1600s by cutting off the ridge from the east with a moat and drawbridge, and a small fortification called a lunette to guard the causeway from the south.

Fear of invasion led to further fortifications in the 1800s. Eventually, nineteen forts and artillery batteries were built on the island following Parliament's approval of the Royal Commission for the Defence of the UK report, promoted by Lord Palmerston. Though no invasion occurred, some were enhanced during World War II. Many of these fortifications have since been converted for private use, or largely disappeared. Remaining ones you can still pass by or visit include: The Needles Old and New Batteries, Fort Victoria, Puckpool Battery, and Culver Battery. A public path passes close to Golden Hill Fort, which is in a country park just north of Freshwater. You can also walk or drive by Bembridge Fort near Culver Down. Sandown Fort is now the Wildheart Animal Sanctuary.

During the 1800s a number of grand houses were built and named as if they were castles, including Steephill, East Cowes and Norris Castle. These have since been demolished or abandoned. Ryde Castle was also built as a house in 1833 but survives today as a pub hotel.

Further Reading

Anglo-Saxon Isle of Wight↗
Carisbrooke Castle↗
Isabella de Fortibus↗
Lords of the Isle of Wight↗
Governors of the Isle of Wight↗
Device Forts↗
Yarmouth Castle↗
Yarmouth Defences↗
Palmerston Forts↗

Industry on the Isle of Wight

From Roman until the 1700s, most work on the island seems to have been agricultural or a related occupation. Since then, however, a wider range of work has been available, in hospitality, tourism, and also in various forms of manufacturing, a selection of which are covered in this document.

The Domesday Book, 1086, recorded 24 watermills on the Isle of Wight. One of these sites still has a working mill you can visit, Calbourne. These mills were presumably associated with agriculture, for example grinding corn to make flour. From around 1500 mills were also used for fulling, part of the process making cloth, including Isle of Wight Kersey fabric, some of which was exported. Watermills continued operation until the 1900s, including the still existing Pan Mill in Newport.

The island also had a number of tidal and windmills, although only one windmill still survives.

Beer was no doubt an important product from its introduction in the middle ages. One of the island's most famous brewers was Mews, who started production in the late 1600 or 1700s. In 1814, Mew, Langton and Company were founded. The firm continued until it was bought out by Strongs of Romsey in 1965. Their old Newport brewery sadly caught fire in 1979.

Alum bay was named in hope that it would be a source of alum. Instead, the famous sands were found to have commercial value. During the 1700s sand was extracted and exported via Yarmouth, where the old sand house can still be seen to the west of the swing bridge over the Yar. A painting dated 1748 shows workers at Alum Bay and provides insight into this industry.

As the population increased, there was more demand for building materials. Bricks were used in in the 1500s and 1600s. A number of brickworks were set up in the late 1700s and 1800s, including the Pritchetts, who set up a nearby brickyard to supply bricks for building the Newport House of Industry. Following this they set up a new brickyard at Kitbridge in to supply bricks for construction of the Parkhust / Albany Barracks. The Pritchett family later opened yards at a dozen or so locations around the island. Their Rookley Brickyards, the last on the island, closed in 1974.

During the 1700s there was significant trade with America. Rice and tobacco were exported to East Cowes, and shipped on to Holland, Germany and Portugal. These goods were often unloaded and stored in warehouses before being sold and shipped out again. There were facilities to clean or sift rice in case it had been contaminated or contained high levels of dust. Spring Hill House was bought by one of the traders, and enlarged by his grandson, confirming the wealth of this trade.

In 1802 J S White's grandfather, a shipbuilder from Kent, and bought a pre-existing yard in East Cowes. He also developed a site in West Cowes to create the Thetis Yard, completed in 1815. Meanwhile the East Cowes site was rebuilt as the Falcon Yard, opened in 1825. By the 1850s the firm employed around 500 craftsmen. They continued to expand, and by the 1900s were designing and constructing medium sized naval and merchant ships, as well as over 130 lifeboats. They bought a hammerhead crane, installed in West Cowes in 1912, which still survives. When the business was sold in 1968, it had around 1000 employees. It finally closed in 1981.

A lace making factory was established in Newport in 1827, using machines transferred from London. Up to 200 people were employed making blonde lace edged in silk. A Production continued until 1876 when the owner died. As no one wanted to take over, the factory equipment was sold. A Gazetteer article about Newport from 1858 lists other factories and trade at that time.

In 1841 a tidal mill on the west bank of the Medina River was sold to a London cement manufacturer. Chalk from Shide chalk pit was fired in kilns and stones from the river were mixed in to produce a particularly strong cement, well regarded and prize-winning at the time. The riverside location made it easy to ship raw materials and finished product. Production continued here until 1939. The remains of this factory can be seen from the Cowes to Newport cycle way, just inside the grounds of the Vestas Wind Turbine factory. A pair of semi-detached houses in East Cowes are built with concrete from the Medina Cement Works. Dating from 1852 these are some of the oldest, if not the oldest, surviving concrete houses in the world, grade 2 listed.

Sam Saunders, a local boat builder and inventor, built the experimental A.4 Medina flying boat in 1925/6. The Saunders-Roe firm was founded in 1929 after aircraft designer A V Roe bought S E Saunders & Co. The new firm produced several different flying boats before World War II, when they manufactured Supermarine Walrus and Sea Otters. After the war they produced two more models of flying boat, and modified ones produced by Short, but this came to an end by 1955. From 1952 they took over the Skeeter Helicopter Project.

In 1959 Saunders-Roe demonstrated the first practical hovercraft, their SR.N1, based on Sir Christopher Cockerell's design. That year Westlands took over both their hovercraft and their helicopter interests. By 1966 the hovercraft work had been transferred to the newly formed British Hovercraft Company (BHC). Their SR.N4 model was used by cross-channel ferry services for around 30 years. BHC also produced some military helicopters, but ceased operations by 1984.

Britten and Norman started developing crop-spraying equipment in the 1950s, then set up a company in Bembridge to design and manufacture their own planes. They have sold over 1200 of their twin-engined Islander plane, and over 70 of their three engined Trislander.

Further Reading

List of Watermills↗ Calbourne Mill↗ Fulling Mills↗ Pan Mill↗
Mew, Langton & Co↗ Great Brewery Fire↗ Sand House↗ Sand Collection↗
Island Brickmaking↗ Albany Barracks↗ Rice Trade↗ Spring Hill House↗
J S White↗ Cowes Crane↗ Lace Making↗ Gazetteer Article↗
Medina Cement Works↗ Concrete Houses↗ Saunders-Roe↗ Britten-Norman↗
SR.N1 Hovercraft↗ British Hovercraft Company↗ Hovercraft Travel to the Isle of Wight↗

Literary Isle of Wight

There are many authors associated with the Isle of Wight. Some have simply come on holiday, some have stayed longer and written one of their famous works, and a few have bought homes and lived here. The Isle of Wight's green and seaside environment has no doubt inspired many and enhanced their creativity. Its peaceful, quiet places ensure that authors have time to write. And the clear air is healthier than the Victorian smog in London many of them were escaping from.

Most places on the island are linked with at least one author. Diaries, poems and books have been written all over the island, and the literary trail map notes many authors and their favourite locations. Two villages in particular have attracted clusters of authors: Bonchurch and Freshwater.

Sir John Oglander (1585 -1655) was an early island author. Deputy-governor of Portsmouth, then the Isle of Wight he was a royalist and supporter of Charles I while he was imprisoned on the island. He kept a diary which was first published in 1888.

Sir Richard Worsley may have used this diary as a source for his History of the Isle of Wight, published in 1781. Sir Richard was however most famous for a scandalous divorce case in which he accused his wife of infidelity and sued for £20,000. It transpired however that he had encouraged this, and turned a blind eye to her 27 (!) previous lovers. The jury therefore only awarded a nominal sum of one shilling. The case was notorious and much reported at the time. Lady Worsley commissioned and published an epistle described by Samuel Johnson as "the best written poem that has made its appearance these many years". Tour books of the island were published by John Hassell in 1790 and Charles Tomkins around 1795, as well as more histories. The 1812 publication on the chalybeate (mineral) spring in Niton also no doubt encouraged more visits.

John Keats first visited the island in 1817, staying in Carisbrooke, and it is said he started his poem Endymion (a thing of beauty is a joy forever) then. In 1819 he stayed in Eglantine Cottage (now called Keats Cottage) in Shanklin, which is where he wrote On the Sea.

Reverend James White's wife Rosa inherited land in Bonchurch from her father who had however specified in his will that this should not be developed. The White's were able to obtain a private Act of Parliament dated 21 June 1836 to allow them to "grant building leases". In 1855 Brannon wrote that "this beautiful estate was advertised to be sold off in small lots for building 18 or 20 villas". By modern standards the plots would be considered generous. The Bonchurch conservation area appraisal states that "thanks to its topography this area is one of secret places which surprise and delight. The delight comes from the fantasy and fun of the Victorian architecture which isn't immediately visible but which is found around corners and down lanes. The steep green banks and large trees are mysterious and concealing, and along with the stone walls make this a village which has hidden treasures around each corner". Bonchurch and other parts of Ventnor have attracted many famous visitors since the 1850s.

Reverend White had literary connections and was an author himself. In 1838 Charles Dickens and his wife stayed at the Needles and then Ventnor. In 1849 Dickens rented Winterbourne Villa from

White. Dickens wrote parts of David Copperfield there. It is claimed that he based Mr Dick in that novel, and Mrs Haversham in Great Expectations, on characters he met while staying in Bonchurch. John Leech, who had previously illustrated A Christmas Carol, stayed nearby in Bonchurch during 1849. The blue plaque commemorating Dickens' visit also lists Myles Birket Foster, painter, and William Adams, religious scholar and author, who also stayed there around this time.

The poet Algernon Swinburne was brought up in East Dene from around 1837. He apparently climbed Culver Cliff at seventeen to prove to his parents that he was not a coward. Other famous writers associated with the area in later years include Turgenev and Karl Marx, who both stayed in Ventnor, Henry de Vere Stacpoole, who lived in at Cliff Dene in Bonchurch and gave the village its pond, and Alfred Noyes, who lived at Lisle Combe in St Lawrence.

A second cluster was established at Freshwater. Tennyson first came to the Isle of Wight in 1846 with Edward Moxon to visit James White of Bonchurch. Tennyson visited Dickens in Bonchurch in 1849. Tennyson was staying in Bonchurch again in 1852 when he first went to Freshwater to view Farringford, which is in the countryside south of Freshwater. When Tennyson's wife Emily viewed the house in 1853 she thought "I must have that view". Many of Tennyson's famous poems were written at or near Farringford, including Charge of the Light Brigade, Maud, and Crossing the Bar. Sadly, Tennyson's fame led many to visit Freshwater in hopes of seeing him. In 1867 Tennyson bought another countryside property to get away from the crowds, but still stayed at Farringford in the winter. He also had a bridge built over the public footpath between his house and the High Down behind. He said that the air up there was worth six pence a pint. This hill is now called Tennyson Down and is the site of the Tennyson Memorial put up in 1897, five years after his death.

In 1860 Julia Margaret Cameron visited Tennyson and bought a pair of cottages near Farringford. She had these joined together to form Dimbola Lodge. Many writers and artists came to visit Julia, or Tennyson, or both, including nonsense-poets Edward Lear and Lewis Carroll. In 1868 Charles Darwin rented a cottage near Dimbola. When Longfellow visited the island with his family that year he stayed at both Freshwater Bay and Bonchurch. Julia's photographs record these visits. Both Dimbola and Farringford are now museums so you can visit to learn more about their story.

Virginia Woolf, Julia Margaret Cameron's great-niece, wrote a 1935 play, Freshwater, satirising the Victorians there. Lynne Truss also wrote a 1996 novel, Tennyson's Gift, based on these events.

Further Reading

Literary Trail↗
Lady Worsley's reply↗
Eglantine/Keats Cottage↗
Bonchurch Residents↗
Alfred, Lord Tennyson ↗
Dimbola Museum↗
Sir John Oglander↗
John Keats First Visit↗
Whites' Act of Parliament↗
Charles Dickens↗
Farringford↗
Freshwater, a comedy ↗
Sir Richard Worsley↗
John Keats Letter↗
Bonchurch Appraisal ↗
Swinburne and Culver↗
Julia Margaret Cameron↗
Tennysons Gift↗

Royal Isle of Wight

Charles I believed he had an absolute right to rule, which created conflict with Parliament, and religious disputes. Civil war broke out in Scotland (1638), Ireland (1641) and England (1642). After his defeat Charles was held under house arrest from May 1646 until a settlement could be negotiated. By November 1647 he had been moved to Hampton Court but was not well guarded so that he was able to escape custody. He made contact with Colonel Robert Hammond, Governor of the Isle of Wight. Charles had hoped Hammond would arrange passage to France but instead Hammond imprisoned him again at Carisbrooke and contacted Parliament for advice.

While at Carisbrooke Charles was still able to communicate with his supporters and allies who started the second English Civil War in 1648. Cromwell's New Model Army soon put down these uprisings, however. In September Charles was allowed to lodge in Newport so he could agree a "Treaty of Newport" with Parliament. By December, however, Cromwell and his supporters had lost patience. Hammond was replaced as governor and Charles was imprisoned again. He was moved back to London via Hurst Castle, and executed in January 1949.

While he was imprisoned at Carisbrooke, Charles twice attempted escape. The first time he was supposed to climb out of his bedroom window to the courtyard below. Unfortunately he was unable to squeeze through the window bars. His supporters later smuggled in nitric acid and a hacksaw so he could try again. By now, however, his captors were aware of the situation and walked in to Charles' room while he was trying to remove the window bar. Jane Whorwood, one of his loyal supporters, arranged the ship that would take him to France. She also advised a third attempt when it was clear the Treat of Newport would fail, but Charles dismissed her suggestion.

Charles's wife Queen Henrietta Maria fled England in 1644, taking up residence in Paris where she was later joined by her son Charles, the future Charles II, and her other children James, Mary and Henrietta. Princess Elizabeth Stuart and Prince Henry Stuart however remained in England as Parliament refused permission for them to leave. They were allowed to meet their father one last time the day before his execution. Elizabeth wrote a moving account of this meeting and the instructions Charles gave them. Henry swore he would accept the crown while his elder brothers still lived. When their brother Charles was crowned King of Scotland in 1650, Elizabeth and Henry were moved them to Carisbrooke. Elizabeth caught a cold, which developed into pneumonia. She died in September and is buried in St Thomas' church, with a grave stone marked ES, for Elizabeth Stuart. Queen Victoria later commissioned a white marble statue of her as a more fitting monument. Prince Henry was then finally permitted to join Henrietta in Paris. When the monarchy was restored in 1660, Henry accompanied his brother back to London, but caught smallpox and died before the coronation.

In 1817, the Prince Regent dined at Nash's East Cowes Castle with an honour guard of 400 from Parkhurst / Albany Barracks, and stayed again in 1819. Victoria stayed with her mother, the Duchess of Kent, in the neighbouring Norris Castle in 1831 and again in 1833. Westfield in Bonchurch was originally designed in 1840 for Queen Adelaide who was by then widowed and in poor health. This house was only completed in 1849, however, the year she died.

Seeking a peaceful retreat from their palaces in London where they could enjoy family life, Victoria and Albert leased Osborne House in East Cowes and purchased it two years later in 1845. The existing house was not large enough for their needs, however, Albert planned for an italianate villa, which was completed in 1851. They also bought the neighbouring Barton Manor estate in 1845 to house equerries and royal visitors. Victoria and Albert were keen art collectors and Osborne House still houses some impressive paintings and sculptures.

Though none of their children were born on the island, but they all spent time here. A cottage was imported from Switzerland and constructed on site for them in 1853, next to the gardens where they learned about the natural world. Beyond the Swiss Cottage is Osborne's private beach. The family spent long periods at Osborne House, including Victoria's birthday on 24th May, and Albert's birthday on 26th August – though this tradition ended after Albert died in 1861. From then on, Victoria spent every Christmas at Osborne House, including her last in 1900, and she died there in January 1901.

The Queen and her guests travelled via Gosport where a private railway station, Royal Victoria Station, was built inside Royal Clarence Yard. Osborne House's Audience Room is where the Privy Council waited before meeting with Victoria in the Council Room. The house was extended in 1880 with a private chapel and a new dormitory for Victoria's Indian Servants. In 1882 the Durbar Room was completed to provide a larger entertainment space, decorated in mughal-gothic style. There were 15 permanent staff, increasing to 70 when the royal family was in residence.

Victoria's youngest daughter, Princess Beatrice, was Governor of the Isle of Wight from 1896 to her death in 1944. She moved from her cottage in the grounds of Osborne House to apartments in the castle in 1913. She is buried in a joint tomb alongside her husband, Prince Henry of Battenberg, in St Mildred's Church, Whippingham, which is also where they married. After Victoria's death, Beatrice spent 30 years editing and transcribing her diaries, finishing in 1931.

Earl Mountbatten, a great grandson of Queen Victoria, was the penultimate governor of the island from 1965 to 1974. The island's hospice is named Mountbatten after him.

Over the centuries there were other royal visitors and residents of the island. Princess Cecily of York, for example, spent time on the Isle of Wight with her third husband, with whom she had two children. She died in 1507, perhaps on the island, and may have been buried at Quarr Abbey.

Further Reading

Charles I↗
Princess Elizabeth Stuart↗
History of Osborne House↗
Christmas at Osborne House↗
Mountbatten Hospice↗
Robert Hammond↗
Prince Henry Stuart↗
Art at Osborne House↗
Gosport Railway Station↗
Cecily of York↗
Jane Whorwood↗
East Cowes Castle↗
Birthdays at Osborne↗
Princess Beatrice↗

Cowes and East Cowes

The town of Cowes is on the west side of the Medina River. It also called West Cowes to distinguish it from East Cowes on the other side of the river. The Red Funnel car ferry connects East Cowes to Southampton, a one hour crossing. The Red Jet fast catamaran provides a passenger service between Cowes and Southampton, taking just half an hour to cross.

If arriving on the car ferry you are likely to see a hangar with a huge union jack painted on its doors. The Columbine Shed is famous for manufacturing sea planes, rockets, and then hovercraft. Following the A3021 about a mile up the hill out of East Cowes brings you to Osborne House, East Cowes most famous tourist destination. You can walk or take a number 4 or 5 bus if you prefer.

Alternatively you can reach East Cowes Esplanade from the ferry terminal by turning left down Maresfield Road, with Waitrose on your right, and the Classic Boat museum ahead. The esplanade takes you to the Shoreside cafe and children's play area at the end of this cul de sac. There is a camp site just up the hill from here. The original Henry VIII East Cowes Castle and also John Nash's East Cowes Castle were both located nearby, but are now demolished. Norris Castle and its grade I listed grounds still survive past the end of the esplanade, but are not currently open to the public.

On fine evenings you can often enjoy views of cruise ships passing by, about an hour after they set off from Southampton. The channel sweeps round Bramble Bank, then comes close to shore here.

You can also follow the Uffa Fox trail around places associated with this East Cowes yacht designer.

There is a chain ferry which takes cars, bikes, and pedestrians between East Cowes and Cowes. When this is out of service for maintenance, a small ferry boat takes bikes and pedestrians only.

The High Street in Cowes has a good range of shops, including a number selling sailing gear, clothing, souvenirs, and some eclectic independent stores. There are also several cafés, pubs, and restaurants. The Max Aitken Museum has some interesting nautical memorabilia, including several items from the royal yacht Britannia raced from 1893 – 1936 by Edward VII and George V. Cowes is particularly busy in the summer when sailing events take place, including the Round the Island Race, usually in June, and Cowes Regatta, usually in July or August. The one-day Round the Island Race was first held in 1931 and now over 1,000 boats take part, creating a great spectacle from viewing points around the island. The one-week Cowes Regatta was first held in 1826 and includes 40 races per day, with around 500 boats and 2,500 competitors taking part. On-shore there is a festival atmosphere with food marquees, live entertainment, and parties. Traditionally there is a fireworks display on the Friday of Cowes Week, if finances permit.

The Yacht Club started in 1815, meeting for dinners in London and in Cowes to discuss yachting. The first commodore was Earl Yarborough, who had married a niece of Sir Richard Worsley, and lived at Appledurcombe House. The Prince Regent was a keen sailor and joined in 1817. When he became George IV in 1820 the club changed its name to the Royal Yacht Club. Their first regatta included a £100 Gold Cup event and a second race just for prize money. Turner sketched and

painted the second regatta when he visited East Cowes Castle in 1827. The club became the Royal Yacht Squadron in 1833. In 1851, the year of the Great Exhibition, the New York Yacht Club's America won the £100 round the island challenge race, which led to the America's Cup trophy and race. In 1854, after the Henry VIII Cowes Castle was decommissioned, it was leased and then bought by the club, and large parts of it rebuilt. Prestigious Cowes Week events include the Queen's Cup, presented to the Royal Southampton Yacht Club in 1897, and, starting in 1951 both the Britannia Cup, presented to the Royal Yacht Squadron by King George VI, and the New York Yacht Club Cup, presented by that club to the Royal Yacht Squadron. Since 2007 Cowes Week has been organised by a specially incorporated company.

There is sheltered mooring out as far as the rock sea wall off East Cowes foreshore. This usually fills up during the summer in time for Cowes Week. There are several sailing clubs based in Cowes, and there is longer term mooring along the river near the centre of town, including Shephards Marina, and Cowes Yacht Haven, which also provides maintenance and repair services. East Cowes has a marina upriver from the chain ferry. A water taxi service is available to take you from the Red Jet terminal to destinations such as the Folly Inn, Island Harbour Marina, or Newport Quay.

You have to be a member of the Royal Yacht Squadron or an invited guest to enter Cowes Castle but you can follow the esplanade round the outside of the building, past the bronze cannons used to start yacht races. The esplanade continues beside Princes Green, with its shingle beach, to Egypt Point, the northernmost point of the island. You can walk on further, reaching Gurnard, with its pretty green, beach huts, pub, and a beach with views across the Solent toward Lepe Beach and Lymington. You also pass two refreshment kiosks along the way. Egypt Esplanade was built by the local Board of Health and opened in 1894 by the Prince of Wales.

Northwood House and its grounds are above Princes Green. This house was bought and rebuilt by the Ward family. In Victorian times lavish parties and high society soirées were held here, with many royal guests including Queen Victoria herself. The grade II* listed property can be hired for weddings or other occasions. The house also hosts a variety of events such as food and drink festivals, the Wight Proms, and the Isle of Wight Literary Festival. Northwood park has tennis courts and a children's play area, and is a popular public green space in the centre of Cowes.

A railway used to run between from Newport and Cowes, and there is now a supermarket on the site of the former station. From the edge of town you can follow the old railway line, which is now a cycle track, and is also popular with joggers and pedestrians. Newport is just 4.5 miles away, but you can continue from there to Sandown along the rest of the Red Squirrel Trail.

Further Reading

East Cowes Heritage↗ Cruise Ship Schedule↗ Cowes Chain Ferry↗
Round the Island Race↗ Cowes Regatta↗ Royal Yacht Squadron↗
Gurnard Beach↗ Northwood House↗ Max Aitken Museum↗
Red Squirrel Trail↗ West Cowes Walk Uffa Fox Walking Trail Cowes Rope Walk

Newport

Newport is the second largest town on the island, after Ryde, with around 25,000 inhabitants. Centrally located, it hosts the Isle of Wight council buildings and the main Southern Vectis bus hub, with services all round the island. The river Medina runs through the town and is navigable from the Newport Harbour down to Cowes and the open waters of the Solent.

The remains of a Roman villa, discovered in 1926, include an under-floor heating system. The town was laid out on a grid pattern and granted its first charter in the late 1100s. The town was sacked during the French Raid of 1377. A fleet with dozens of ships carrying thousands of troops was harassing the south coast. After being repulsed from Poole and Southampton, they turned to the Isle of Wight. Deadman's lane, an earlier name for Trafalgar Road, and Nodehill (from Noddies or Bodies Hill) indicate that there was a significant toll during this one week invasion. Carisbrooke Castle was successfully defended, but the French were apparently paid a thousand marks to leave.

During this raid Yarmouth, Freshwater, Newtown, Northwood, Wootton, and Ashey were also burnt. Newtown was another planned medieval town, founded in 1256 beside a natural harbour the north coast between Yarmouth and Cowes. By 1344, it was judged to be to twice as valuable as Newport, with a busy and safe harbour. The 1377 raid however highlighted the defensive challenges, and Newtown never really recovered. Newport by contrast benefited from several advantages. It is just over a mile to Carisbrooke Castle, a safe place to shelter from invaders; people and goods travelling to Carisbrooke naturally pass through Newport; small ships and barges can easily travel up and down the river to Cowes and the Solent beyond; there are several water mills on the Medina River and Lukely Brook to process agricultural goods and support manufacturing; thanks to its central location most places on the island are within 10 miles.

The island was invaded again during the Battle of the Solent in 1545. It fared rather better thanks to Henry VIII device forts in Yarmouth, Cowes and East Cowes, and Sandown and also well organised local militia. The French landed at Whitecliff Bay and Bonchurch on the east coast but were held back and retreated without reaching the interior. As well as Henry's forts, locally funded defences were also constructed at a dozen or so locations around the island by 1700. The British navy, moreover, was a formidable force, and the island was never invaded again after 1545.

As confidence returned, Newport began to develop. The marshland to the today's harbour, known then as the Ooze, was enclosed with banks by 1559 and these were improved again in 1584/5. Newport became a borough in 1608. The 1611 map of the Isle of Wight by John Speed has town plans of Newport and Southampton, which are then comparable in size. In 1614 Newport's old Grammar School was founded, and in 1680 its first municipal library. Calvert's Hotel, previously a mayor's home, dates to around 1732. In 1761 the "Blue Jenny" charitable school for poor girls was founded. In 1771 a new workhouse for the whole island was built. A 1786 paving act led to raised pavements, and in 1814 Newport-Ryde road was surfaced with stone chippings. In 1811 the Literary Institute / Country Club was built on the corner of High St and St James. In 1823 a medical dispensary opened, and in 1854 St Thomas Church was rebuilt, now called Newport Minster.

Newport was a hub for the railway network before most of this closed in the 1960s. You could take a direct train to Freshwater, Yarmouth, Cowes, Ventnor, Ryde and Sandown. Mews made beer in Newport from 1814, and shipped it on a motor barge called Wight. Vestas manufacture wind turbines on a site just north of Newport, and these are shipped by barge to Southampton Water. The main island hospital and the HM prison complex are both on the northern edge of the town.

In the past the island returned 6 MPs, 2 for Newport, 2 for Yarmouth, and 2 for Newtown, a "rotten borough. After the 1832 Reform Act, this was reduced to one. In the near future the Isle of Wight constituency will be divided again, with one MP each for East and West Wight. In 1890 the island was created its own county, separate from Hampshire. Local government was granted unitary authority in 1995, which led to the pre-existing councils merging.

Attractions include the Quay Arts centre, Seaclose Park, the Town Hall and Museum. The oldest pub is the Castle Inn (dated around 1664, although some claim it is older). Church Litten park is a former cemetery converted to a central green space, and houses the Valentine Gray monument. Newport also has plenty of supermarkets, high street shops, restaurants, cafés, pubs, and hotels.

There are cycle ways running on the old railway routes to Cowes and to Sandown. Newport is at one end of the Tennyson and Bembridge walking trails. There is a self-guided walk around town passing historic buildings and pubs. You can also walk to Carisbrooke, returning via Mountjoy cemetery; to the Island Harbour Marina and Folly Inn, or the whole Medina valley; along the Mill trail passing historic mills; and the Milne trail, after the famous Newport resident, John Milne.

Further Reading↗

Overview of Newport↗
Newport Quay History↗
Minor Forts before 1700↗
John Speed town plan 1611↗
Southern Vectis Bus Services↗
Mill trail↗
Medina Estuary Walk↗
Vestas Wind Turbines↗
The Old Grammar School↗
Apollo Theatre↗
Newport Minster↗
French Raid of 1377↗
Newport Harbour Assessment↗
Overview of Newtown↗
House of Industry↗
Isle of Wight Council↗
Castle & Cemetery Walk↗
Mews Brewery↗
Valentine Gray memorial↗
God's Providence House↗
Country Club↗
Newport Roman villa↗
Battle of Solent 1545↗
The Harbour Today↗
History of Newtown↗
Railway Network↗
Walk around Newport↗
Milne Trail↗
Mews and Quay Arts↗
Blue Jenny school↗
St Thomas of Canterbury↗
Guildhall↗
Seaclose Park↗

Ryde

In 1377 the French Raid destroyed the village of La Rye. In 1656 the combined population of Lower and Upper Ryde was around 220. Visiting from the mainland could be inconvenient. In 1754 Fielding wrote that he "was at last hoisted into a small boat and being rowed pretty near the shore, was taken up by two sailors, who waded me through the mud and placed me on the land". In 1780/1 Union Street connected the two villages. In 1782 after the Royal George sank at Spithead many of the 1000 dead washed up in Ryde. There is a memorial garden off the Strand telling the story of this tragic event. By 1806 Yelf's Hotel was established in Union Street.

In 1810 Jane Player obtained an Act of Parliament for developing Ryde. In 1811 the population was 1601 and by 1921 this had increased to 11,300. Ryde Pier opened in 1814 and is the oldest pleasure pier in the world. In 1825 the paddle steamer Union started a scheduled summer service between Portsmouth and Ryde. From 1864 to 1969 a tram service ran along the pier, but the old tramway is now the pedestrian walkway. In 1895 a concert pavilion was built at the pier-head. Up to three million customers a year used the pier, and the pier-head included a ball-room, casino, tea bar and pub. These closed in 1968, however, and were demolished 2 years later.

Ryde is the now largest town on the Isle of Wight. A fast catamaran service runs between Portsmouth Harbour Station and Ryde Pier, which takes just over 20 minutes. You can walk, cycle or drive the 680 metres along the pier to Ryde bus interchange, which is also near the hovercraft terminal. Alternatively you can catch an Island Line train from either end of the pier. This electric railway service runs to Shanklin, calling at Brading, Lake, and Sandown. The hovercraft service connects Southsea and Ryde seafronts, and takes just 10 minutes to cross the Solent. A bus service runs between Southsea and Portsmouth Harbour. If you are travelling with a vehicle, however, you need to take the car ferry between Portsmouth and Fishbourne, 15 minutes drive from Ryde.

The island line also stops in St Johns Road station, Ryde, close to the Isle of Wight Bus and Coach Museum. It also stops at Smallbrook Junction to connect with the Isle of Wight Steam Railway. This heritage railway operates between Smallbrook and Wootton, with its main station and museum at Havenstreet, where a programme of events includes real ale festivals and steam fairs. Buses run from Ryde Interchange to most destinations in East Wight, including East Cowes, Wootton, Seaview, Bembridge, Brading, Sandown, Lake, Shanklin, Ventnor, Wroxall and Godshill. There is also a fast and frequent service to Newport, the hub for services to the West Wight.

From Ryde Interchange you can walk east along the sea-front and esplanade, passing the Grade II listed Pavilion, dating from 1926/7. Over the road are the grade II listed Ryde Castle Hotel (1833/4) and Royal Esplanade Hotel (1866/7). There is a small marina here, a funfair, bowling green, boating lake, and a public swimming pool. Ryde first held a carnival in 1888, and continues to do so each summer. The esplanade also hosts events such as the Scooter Rally, and Classic Car Extravaganza, typically in August and September.

Ryde beach is popular with families, with its clean sand and views of Portsmouth. Note that the tide goes out over half a mile, and comes in right up to the sea wall. Beyond the boating lake, is

Appley Beach where some sand remains uncovered even at high tide. It has a number of cafés, beach huts, a park, playground, and Appley Tower, an 1875 folly. Beach sports such as volleyball, five aside football, and paddle board racing are organised at Appley Beach during the summer. Behind the tower is a monument to HMS Sirius, lead ship of the First Fleet to Australia.

You can follow the sea wall further past Puckpool Fort to Seaview, and then the beaches at Seagrove, Priory Bay and St Helen's Duver, about five miles from Ryde Interchange. You are recommended to do so at low tide, so you can walk along the beach rather than diverting inland. You can catch a bus from Seaview or St Helens old railway station back to Ryde. Alternatively you can turn right up Oakhill Road, then left along the footpath which takes you to the Isle of Wight Distillery. As well as tastings, the distillery serves food. It is also on the bus route back to Ryde.

You can also follow the coast path west from the centre of Ryde. This takes you through back streets to Ryde Golf Course, where you can follow the Ladies Walk down to Binstead Church. At low tide you can instead take a shortcut across Ryde west beach to Binstead Stream, at the bottom of the Ladies Walk. After Binstead Church the coast path passes the site of Binstead Quarries, where stone was excavated from Roman times up until the 1900s. You then pass the site of the original Quarr Abbey (founded in 1132) before reaching the modern establishment, re-established in 1907, with the distinctive grade I listed modern church completed in 1912. There is a pleasant tea garden at the Abbey where you can obtain refreshments. Quarr is said to be named after the Binstead Quarries. Binstead Church is also said to contain remnants from the original abbey.

You can catch a bus from the main road outside the Abbey back to Ryde, or you can walk on to Fishbourne, passing the car ferry terminal, to reach the pretty Wootton Bridge. The large pond here is created by a sluice gate which controls Wootton Creek, and often has waterbirds such as herons wading in its shallow waters. You can catch a bus back to Ryde from the bridge.

Westridge Golf Centre, two miles south of Ryde Interchange, provides opportunities to improve your game with a floodlit golf range, putting green, practice bunker and professional coaching. The Wight Karting Go-Kart track is next door. There is a good bus service from here to Ryde centre.

Union Street climbs the hill from the bus & train interchange, then changes its name to the High Street. This provides a good range of shops, selling items such as souvenirs and clothing. You pass Ryde's seaside postcard museum and the Royal Victoria Arcade. Along here and the Esplanade there are many pubs, cafés, bars, fish and chip shops, and restaurants to choose from.

Further Reading

History of Ryde↗
Ryde Carnival↗
Distillery↗
Quarr Abbey↗
Ryde Pier↗
Ryde High Street↗
St Helens Duver↗
Wootton Bridge↗
Ryde Concert Pavilion↗
Royal George Gardens↗
Steam Railway↗
Westridge Golf Centre↗

Sandown and Shanklin

Over 20,000 people live in Sandown, Shanklin and their suburbs Lake and Yaverland. Sandown Bay is one of the sunniest areas in England, with around seven and a half hours of bright sun per day in June. There is continuous sheltered sandy beach all the way from Yaverland, just north of Sandown, to Shanklin Chine. Not surprisingly, this is one of the island's most popular holiday destinations. There are train stations at Sandown, Lake, and Shanklin, and frequent buses connecting to Ryde with its ferries, Ventnor, Godshill, Arreton, Brading, and Newport, the main bus hub. Another bus service also follows the coast via Bembridge, St Helens and Seaview to Ryde.

Brading was historically the main town in this part of the island. Ships able to navigate from the Solent and moor at a quay behind the Bugle Inn on the High Street. Bembridge and Yaverland were effectively a little island, separate from the main Isle of Wight. In 1388, however, a causeway was built at Yarbridge to provide access at any state of the tide. In the following centuries, a number of attempts were made to reclaim Brading Haven, as it was silting up, but these were thwarted by high seas flooding the land again. In 1881, however, an embankment was built over the remains of the haven for a branch of the railway running from Brading to St Helens and Bembridge. Sluice gates protect the marshes from here to Brading, which are now a bird reserve. A sea wall has been constructed to protect Sandham pleasure gardens and boating lake. The main road between Ryde and Sandown still runs via Brading, where some 1,800 people live. By contrast, Bembridge has 3,800 inhabitants, boats now moor at Bembridge Harbour, not Brading Haven.

Starting at the Harbour View café you can follow the beach all around Bembridge to reach the Crab and Lobster Inn. You pass the lifeboat station, founded in 1867, and re-built in 2010 for £7.5M. You can follow the coast path to reach Whitecliff Bay, with its interesting geology, and a summer café. The path then climbs Culver Down, a chalk hill more than 100 metres above the sea. On a clear day there are great views over to the mainland and you can also spot ferries and other ships travelling to and from Portsmouth and Southampton. Looking inland you may also notice small aircraft landing and taking off from the nearby Bembridge Airport. There is a pub and a summer café to provide refreshment, and a monument to Earl Yarborough who founded the Royal Yacht Squadron at Cowes. You also pass World War II gun batteries as you descend to Sandown. Alternatively you can walk inland via Centurions Hill to Brading and its train station. Brading Roman Villa is about a mile south-west of the station with its covered enclosure, shop and café. A final possibility is to walk from Culver Down to Brading Marsh and on to Bembridge Windmill.

Descending Culver Down toward Sandown you first reach Yaverland. At low tide, you can access the beach here, heading north to Culver cliffs or south toward Sandown and Shanklin. On the opposite side of the road the Wildheart Animal Sanctuary is housed in the remains of the Palmerston era Granite Fort. In World War II this fort housed sixteen pumps for the PLUTO (Pipe Line Under The Ocean) operation supplying the D-Day forces with fuel. A short distance to the south is the Dinosaur Isle museum featuring dinosaurs and other fossils discovered on the island. Sandham Gardens were opened in 1924 on the site of Sandham Fort and is now an activity park. The fort, completed in 1631, replaced Henry VIII's Sandown Castle, which was lost to the sea.

From 1864, Sandown benefited from a railway connection to Ryde. Sandown pier opened in 1878. The Ocean Hotel opened in 1899, replacing the earlier Kings Head hotel, where Darwin had stayed. Its dining room apparently had green and gold tapestry panels and Chippendale furniture. Sadly the hotel is currently closed and in poor repair following a fire.

The Isle of Wight Airport, or Sandown Airport, is just outside Lake. This houses the Isle of Wight Aviation museum. It seems curious that the island has two airports so close together. It has been argued that one of them should support commercial flights, although others say this is unlikely.

From Sandown you can continue along the sea wall to Shanklin. You pass a number of beach huts, cafés and a water sports school. Alternatively you can follow the coastal path which takes you through Lake village along the top of the cliff above. You reach Shanklin at the family friendly Small Hope Beach. You can continue along the sea wall between Shanklin Esplanade, with its activity park, bars, and cafés. You also pass the site of Shanklin pier, which was opened in 1890 but suffered significant damage in the Great Storm and was demolished in 1993.

Alternatively you can climb from Small Hope Beach via Hope Road and North Road to reach Shanklin High Street. When Keats stayed at Eglantine Cottage in 1819 there were only 2 lodging houses, but the town prospered in Victoria times. There are now many hotels in the side streets between the High Street and Shanklin Cliff. Shanklin railway station opened in 1864, and the Royal Spa Hotel opened 1890. The hotel was bombed during World War II but its vaults then housed pumps for the PLUTO pipeline. Shanklin Theatre is just off the top of the High Street. The theatre opened in 1934 on the site of a Victorian Reading Room and Town Hall. The picturesque Shanklin Old Village has a number of souvenir shops and tea gardens. From here you can walk down to the sea via Shanklin Chine, the island's oldest tourist attraction, dating from 1817. During World War II, the PLUTO pipeline ran down to the sea via the chine. Alternatively, if you do not want to pay to enter the chine, you can walk down via Tower Cottage Gardens and Chine Avenue.

In 1878, HMS Eurydice sank in Sandown Bay, with only 2 survivors out of 334 on board. The ship's bell is now in St Pauls church tower in Shanklin. Some of the crew are buried in Shanklin cemetery and others in Christ Church, Sandown. There are also memorials in Gosport and Portsmouth.

Further Reading

Brading History↗
Brading Marsh Walk↗
Brading Roman Villa↗
Bembridge Lifeboat↗
Bembridge Windmill Walk↗
Wildheart Animal Sanctuary↗
Granite Fort↗
PLUTO pipeline↗
Dinosaur Isle↗
Sandham Gardens↗
Sandown Castle and Fort↗
History of Sandown↗
Sandown Pier↗
Isle of Wight Airport↗
Aviation Museum↗
History of Shanklin↗
Shanklin Pier↗
Small Hope Beach↗
Shanklin Theatre↗
Shanklin Chine↗
HMS Eurydice↗

Ventnor and the West Wight

Ventnor is the centre of the Undercliff, a strip of land stretching from Old Niton to Bonchurch, five miles long and up to half a mile wide, lying below a high inland cliff. The Undercliff benefits from warmer weather than most of the island, and is mainly green woodland, parks and gardens. This was a hotbed of piracy in the 1700s thanks to its remote beaches, tunnels and caves. It became a popular destination during the Romantic period which started in the late 1700s. The Sandrock Hotel, originally Rock Cottage, was built around 1795, and benefited from the discovery of a chalybeate or mineral spring in 1808. The region is geologically unstable, with significant earth movements requiring the main road to be re-routed inland around Luccombe following the 1810/18 landslips, from Niton to Blackgang, and most recently from Ventnor via Whitwell to Niton.

Ventnor grew from a small fishing village in 1800 to a tourist destination by 1850 following re-development of its two manors, and promotion of the health benefits of its climate. The Royal Hotel opened as the Ventnor Hotel in 1832, and its bath-house is now the Spyglass Inn. Ventnor pier was completed in 1873, but was demolished in 1992/3. You can take a pub themed walk around Ventnor, from Grove Road to the Botanic Garden, passing many of its existing and historic pubs, hotels and other buildings of interest. You can walk west along the coast path to Steephill, St Lawrence and Niton, or east via Bonchurch, the Landslip, and Luccombe to Shanklin. Alternatively, take a circular walk, from Ventnor Downs via the Landslip, Luccombe and Haddon's Pits, where there is good bird watching, and returning via Shanklin Down.

There are no large settlements west of Newport and Cowes. The largest village is Freshwater, which merges with Totland and Colwell. The Yar River, or Western Yar, runs from Freshwater Bay on the south coast to Yarmouth on the north, and originally cut off the western tip of the island: the only land connection was at Freshwater Bay. Car ferries run between Lymington and the historic town of Yarmouth with its castle, boutique shops, cafés, pubs and restaurants. Yarmouth harbour has good moorings and a swing bridge over the river. You can walk along the old railway line beside the river to Freshwater causeway, church and village. The castle, between the ferry terminal and George Hotel, is managed by English Heritage. Yarmouth pier opened in 1846 and is now the longest wooden pier in the UK. In the summer, you may see the Waverley moored there.

There are also several smaller villages and hamlets in the West Wight. Tourist attractions include:

- Needles and Alum Bay↗
- Fort Victoria Country Park in Norton↗
- Farringford House and Museum near Freshwater Bay↗
- Dimbola Galleries and Museum near Freshwater Bay↗
- Tapnell Farm Park outside Freshwater↗
- West Wight Alpacas and Llamas in Wellow↗
- Newtown Nature Reserve near Shalfleet↗
- Mottistone Manor, Gardens and Longstone↗
- Isle of Wight Pearl near Brighstone↗

St Catherine's Lighthouse near Niton↗

The Needles is the most famous natural attraction on the island. In the summer you can take the chairlift or walk down to the beach at Alum Bay and take a boat trip to enjoy the views from the water. You can also take an open top bus from Alum Bay to the Needles. You are advised to get off and walk around the Needles Battery and Rocket Testing Site, where a side path offers the best view of the Needles from on land. A final option is to walk along the road or the neighbouring path from Alum Bay to the Needles, and this is the only alternative during the winter months. You can then return to Alum Bay the way you came. Alternatively, from the Needles you can follow the coast path to Freshwater Bay via the coastguard cottages, beacon, and Tennyson Monument. Both Freshwater Bay and Alum Bay are on bus routes, so you can ride back to your starting point. While you wait you can explore the beach or visit the Dimbola Museum, thatched church and Piano Café.

Godshill village is between Ventnor and Newport, with good bus services. Its attractions include the famous model village and a picturesque church. There are also several shops, pubs and cafés. The Red Squirrel cycle trail passes through Godshill, which is a good place to refresh.

As the West Wight is only sparsely populated the countryside is green and open. There are many walks to enjoy. A bracing walk from Niton takes you down to the Undercliff around St Catherine's lighthouse via the Buddle Inn, Knowles Farm, and Castlehaven, a good place for viewing the Round the Island race. Another circular walk through green countryside takes you via three forts around Yarmouth, Freshwater, Norton Green, Linstone Chine and Norton. The Brighstone village leaflet suggests a number of routes through the quiet and pleasant fields around this attractive venue. For longer walks you can follow the coast path, or the Tennyson Trail from the Needles to Newport.

Popular beaches include Colwell Bay, Totland Bay, Freshwater Bay, Compton Bay, and Brook. These are less crowded than those in the East Wight, with fewer facilities. Colwell Bay has a restaurant, café, bar and toilets. Compton Bay has two miles of sand and cliffs in an entirely natural state.

There are two regular bus services from Newport, reaching Yarmouth, Freshwater, Colwell, Totland, Brighstone, Mottistone, Brook, Compton Bay, Freshwater Bay, and Alum Bay. There are also three summer services, one along the coast road, an open top bus from Yarmouth to Freshwater Bay and the Needles, and the third going via Calbourne, Shalcombe and Tapnell Farm, the site of the largest Isle of Wight Festival, which took place in 1970.

Further Reading

Rock Cottage, Niton↗
Ventnor Historic Pub Walk↗
Undercliff Piracy↗
Freshwater Parish↗
Godshill Village↗
Newtown Walk
Ventnor Royal Hotel↗
Landslip Walk↗
Bonchurch Landslips↗
Yarmouth Castle↗
Three Forts Walk↗
Tapnell Farm Trail
Ventnor Pier↗
The Undercliff↗
St Catherines Walk↗
Yarmouth Pier↗
Brighstone Village Walk↗

Part III
Portsmouth

Introduction to Portsmouth and Its Tourism

The original town, now known as Old Portsmouth, is centred round the Camber, a natural inlet now used as a harbour for Portsmouth's fishing fleet. The southern boundary is Penny Street, which runs parallel to the historic High Street, where you will find many historic and listed buildings. Broad Street runs through the centre of the peninsular, separating the Camber from the harbour entrance. This peninsular was historically known as Spice Island. Ships entering Portsmouth Harbour passed Portsmouth Point here. Their captains might write in their logs the abbreviation Pom. P. which is perhaps the origin of Portsmouth's nickname Pompey.

There are maps from the early 1600s showing the original town or Old Portsmouth. By 1791 the map shows that both Old Portsmouth and the Royal Naval Dockyard were built up, and there are scattered houses along the main road down Portsea Island, with village centres in Kingston, Fratton and Milton. The 1791 map also shows barracks at Hilsea, near the fortified Hilsea Lines protecting north of the island, and Cumberland Fort at Eastney guarding the south east. A later map dated 1855 has a network of roads, the railway, and several suburban settlements across Portsea Island.

Portsmouth's historical population was around 1,200 in 1200, then 2,500 in 1600, 32,000 in 1801, 72,000 in 1851, 114,000 in 1871, 190,000 in 1901, 250,000 in 1939, 177,00 in 1960s, and 208,000 in 2022. The population grew significantly during the 1700s, 1800s, and early 1900s. Numbers fell after World War II but the population has now started to grow again. As the population grew, the town expanded away from the original settlement, and subsequently both Portsea Island and the formal boundaries of Portsmouth were also extended. Land was reclaimed from the late 1600s to enable the expansion of the historic dockyard. Great Salterns on the east of Portsea Island was reclaimed around 1705. During the 1700s, Portsmouth Common, north of Old Portsmouth and west of the dockyard was built on, and renamed Portsea Town. During the 1800s, Portsmouth expanded north to reach Landport, Buckland and Stamshaw. Two marshes, the Little Morass and Great Morass, were reclaimed as part of the development of Southsea. Milton Lake was also filled in. Milton and Eastney were developed for housing.

Buckland, Fratton and Stamshaw were incorporated into Portsmouth during the late 1800s, and the rest of Portsea Island in 1904. In 1920 Cosham, Wymering, and Paulsgrove on the mainland became part of Portsmouth. Portsmouth was designated a city in 1926. Finally, in 1932, Drayton and Farlington on the mainland also joined the city. Port Solent is built on reclaimed land connecting Horsea, previously an island, to the mainland. Plans for Tipner Lake have been paused.

Portsmouth is part of the South Hampshire urban area, which stretches from Southampton to Havant, and also includes Eastleigh, Fareham and Gosport. There are gaps of 200 metres or less between these settlements, which are connected by the M27, A27, and also have good railway links. The total population of 850,000 of this urban area makes it the seventh largest in the UK.

Historic Dockyard

The historic royal naval dockyard is perhaps Portsmouth's most famous and popular tourist destination. The entrance to the Historic Dockyard is just a couple of hundred yards from the Hard, following the water's edge away from the railway station. The Historic Dockyard includes some of Portsmouth's top attractions such as HMS Victory, HMS Warrior, the Mary Rose, the National Museum of the Royal Navy, Explosion Museum of Naval Firepower (by Waterbus to Gosport), and the Royal Navy Submarine Museum (by Waterbus to Gosport). The Mary Rose famously sank during the Battle of the Solent in 1545, watched by Henry VIII. She was raised in 1982, and about 40% of her original structure had survived on the sea bed. Over 25,000 on-board items have been found, and the remains of half her crew. The Victory is preserved in dry dock number 2, the oldest in the world. Her original Trafalgar configuration has been restored. The Warrior, dating from 1860, is an original iron hulled armour plated Royal Navy warship. She has been a museum ship since 1987, part of the national historic fleet. Two first world war ships are also on display here: the HMS M33, a monitor ship, and HM Coastal Boat 4, a torpedo boat.

You can buy a ticket covering just one attraction, three, or all of them. It is worth spending some time in advance planning your visit, deciding which attractions you would like to see, and when. You are likely to spend around an hour per attraction, which means that seeing all of them could take a full day, in which case you should also make plans for food and refreshments.

Gunwharf Quays and Spinnaker Tower

Heading in the opposite direction from the Hard, and passing under the railway bridge, you reach Gunwharf Quays, constructed on the site of a former naval ordnance yard. This popular waterside venue has over 90 designer outlet shops, 30 restaurants, harbour tours, and the Spinnaker Tower. The tower is 170 metres high and from the viewing platforms you can see up to 23 miles. You can enjoy a cocktail or high tea at the top, or even abseil down.

Millenium Promenade

You can continue along the Millenium Promenade from Gunwharf Quays. This 4 kilometre path runs from the Historic Dockyard to Southsea Castle via Gunwharf Quays and Old Portsmouth. It is marked at ground level by a chain motif and Millenium Promenade labels. The promenade takes you past many of the sights of Old Portsmouth. You can divert a short distance inland along the High Street to see Portsmouth Cathedral. You are advised to have a printed or on-line copy of the map to hand in case you wander off the path, deliberately or by mistake. There are over 30 points of interest along the route, including the Spinnaker Tower, the Camber, the Point, Round Tower, Square Tower, Sallyports, and Royal Garrison Church, before you reach Southsea Common and Southsea Castle. In theory you could complete this path in an hour, but you will no doubt want to stop to read the information boards along the way, and perhaps to visit some of the attractions you pass. It is therefore more likely you will spend several hours, or even a full day.

Along the Promenade you also pass Hotwalls Beach, Clarence Pier, and the Blue Reef Aquarium, which may also be worth a detour. You may also visit the D-Day Story Museum, which is just inland from Southsea Castle.

After you finish the official Millenium Promenade, you can also walk on from Southsea Castle, following the seafront. Another hour or so will take you past the Exploria Activity Centre, South Parade Pier (or Southsea Pier), and Eastney Beach to Fort Cumberland, where you can enjoy a tour of the Portsmouth Distillery. Note that the far end of Eastney Beach is popular with naturists.

Many of Portsmouth's hotels are near one or more of these waterfront attractions. Alternatively, you may find cheaper accommodation inland, and can then take a bus or train down to the sea.

Other Portsmouth Attractions

Away from the waterfront, Portsmouth has plenty of other attractions. Charles Dickens was born here, and his family's house is now a museum. The Portsmouth City Museum and Art Gallery is housed in the grade II listed former Clarence and Victoria Barracks, which date from the 1890s. The museum tells the story of Portsmouth, including a display about Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, who worked here for 10 years, and wrote his first Sherlock Holmes stories.

You may also like to visit the Cumberland House Natural History Museum, the Hilsea Lido and Lines, the Canoe Lake and Southsea Model Village, or Mountbatten Sports Centre with its Olympic swimming pool, gym, indoor and outdoor pitches, running track, and velodrome. You can follow a self-guided trail around Old Portsmouth taking in locations associated with Nelson. There are also walks around Langstone Harbour and Farlington Marshes, or you can cycle all round Portsea Island.

Portsmouth has two large theatres, both designed by Frank Matcham. Southsea's grade II* King's Theatre in Southsea opened in 1907, and can seat 1600. The New Theatre Royal was completed in 1900 and can seat over 650 people. It was built on the site of the 1854 Landport Hall, near the Guildhall. The Groundling's Theatre operates in a grade II* 1794 building, originally a free school. This building can also be hired for weddings.

The Victorious Festival takes place at Southsea Common over 3 days, usually in August. It has attracted an audience of over 120,000 in total, a maximum of 65,000 per day. Camping is available on Farlington playing fields.

Nearby Attractions

Just outside Portsmouth on Portsdown Hill you can visit Fort Nelson, a Grade I listed monument with an artillery collection, live firing demonstrations, tunnels and a 32 metre high Nelson monument. Purbrook and Widley Forts are also on Portsdown Hill, and both host activity centres. Portchester Castle is surrounded by 6 metre high walls which were originally roman enclosing an area of nearly 4 hectares Inside the walls is a medieval castle with an impressive keep, and a norman church. You have to pay the enter the keep, but the rest of the site, with its views across Portsmouth Harbour, is free. Across the water in Gosport, Fort Brockhurst is another well-preserved Palmerston fort, one of five defending Gosport also dating from the mid 1800s. The fort has a parade ground, gun ramps, moated keep, and armoury, and is free to enter. Also in Gosport, the Little Woodham Living History Museum shows you country life in the mid-17th century.

The Hovercraft Museum in Lee-on-Solent has more than 60 hovercraft, including the last remaining SR.N4, the Princess Anne, which provided for cross-channel services for 33 years. It has a large library of hovercraft-related documents, publications, film, video, photographs and drawings. It has its own slip-way and during the summer may take visitors out to sea on one of its craft.

Beyond Lee-on-Solent is the Titchfield Haven National Nature Reserve, where you might see sea birds such as avocets, godwits, terns, and black-headed gulls, or bearded tits, bull finches, or otters in the neighbouring marshland. You can follow a footpath along the old canal to the picturesque Titchfield village, an hour's walk inland. The ruins of Titchfield Abbey are another mile or so inland. The abbey was converted into a private house by the Earl of Southampton. It is free to enter. You can alongside from Warsash to Bursledon following the Hamble River, which takes about an hour. Warsash is connected by a passenger ferry to the picturesque port village of Hamble. Buses and trains connect Hamble, Warsash and Titchfield to Portsmouth and Southampton, although you should check the timetables carefully and plan your journey if using public transport. If travelling by car, you can instead return to where you parked, as either route can be a (longer) circular walk.

To the north east, Staunton Farm in Havant has rare breeds, maze, walled, gardens and 1000 acres of parkland. The Queen Elizabeth Country Park, north of Waterlooville, can be accessed from the A3. Chichester lies to the east of Portsmouth, and can easily be reached by train, bus, or car. It has an impressive cathedral and famous festival theatre. Fishbourne Roman Palace is just outside Chichester, with its impressive mosaics and extensive site, larger than Buckingham Palace. Goodwood estate is also a short drive from Chichester and offers a historic house and motor racing circuit. Heading south, it is easy to take a hovercraft or catamaran from Portsmouth or Southsea to Ryde, with its sandy beaches and trains or buses to other Isle of Wight attractions.

Further reading

Historic Dockyard Visit↗
Millenium Promenade↗
Fort Nelson↗
Hovercraft Museum↗
Hamble River Walk↗
Langstone Harbour Walk↗
Southsea Castle↗
Hotwalls↗
Blue Reef Aquarium↗
Eastney Beach↗
Portsmouth Museum↗
Kings Theatre↗
Little Woodham↗
Hamble Village↗
Chichester Cathedral↗
Gunwharf Quays↗
Hotwalls Beach↗
Portchester Castle↗
Titchfield Haven↗
Hilsea Lines Walk↗
Portsea Island Cycle↗
Portsmouth Cathedral↗
Clarence Pier↗
Exploria↗
Portsmouth Distillery↗
Natural History Museum↗
Groundlings Theatre↗
Titchfield Abbey↗
Queen Elizabeth Country Park↗
Fishbourne Roman Palace↗
Spinnaker Tower↗
Nelson Trail↗
Fort Brockhurst↗
Titchfield Canal Walk↗
Farlington Marshes Walk↗
Portsmouth Museums↗
Royal Garrison Church↗
Southsea Common↗
Southsea Pier↗
Dickens Museum↗
Theatre Royal↗
Victorious Festival↗
Hamble Ferry↗
Staunton Farm↗
Goodwood House↗

Geography of Portsmouth

The City of Portsmouth occupies the whole of Portsea Island. The city also now includes some suburbs on a 1 kilometre wide strip of mainland to the north of the island. Most residents live on Portsea Island, which has an area of 24.5 square kilometres. Portsea has the highest population density in Britain outside London. The island is low lying, with its highest point just 6 metres above sea level. North of Portsmouth there is a ridge of chalk hills running east-west. These include Portsdown Hill, which is around 130 metres above sea level with a fine view over Portsmouth.

To the west of Portsea Island is Portsmouth Harbour, an expanse of tidal water around 13 square kilometres in area. The harbour is a "ria", the drowned valley of a stream flowing from Portsdown Hill to the Solent. It has a narrow entrance, around 200 metres wide, with the old town of Portsmouth to the east. North of the Historic Dockyard, however, the harbour widens to over 2 kilometres. Portsea Island forms the eastern shoreline of the harbour, Portchester is to the north, and Gosport to the west. There are several islands within the harbour and side channels formed by tidal creeks. The harbour has a number of "lakes", areas which remain covered by water even at low tide, and also extensive inter-tidal mudflats. Portsmouth Harbour is recognised as a protected wetland site of special scientific interest and international importance.

The area of the Solent to the south of Portsmouth Harbour is known as Spithead. The Sand Spit running about five miles out to sea on the western side of the channel leading into Portsmouth Harbour. It is the southern end of this spit which forms the Spithead, but the name is also used to mean the eastern end of the Solent, which is about 22.5 kilometres long and 6.5 kilometres wide.

To the east of Portsea Island is Langstone Harbour, another large expanse of tidal water, around 20 square kilometres in area. Langstone village is to the north of this harbour, and Hayling Island to the east. Chichester Harbour is further east again, beyond Hayling Island.

Portsea Island is separated from the mainland by a narrow channel of water, Portsea Creek, which small craft such as canoes can navigate at high tide. Portsea is connected to the mainland by three road bridges, one railway bridge, and two separate footbridges.

The main roads from the west are the M27 and the A27. From the M27 you can join the M275, which runs south across Portsmouth Harbour and travels down the west of Portsea Island. The M275 brings you to the international ferry port and then continues as the A3 towards the modern city centre and Old Portsmouth. The A27 crosses Portsea Creek, also known as Portsbridge Creek. From here you can take the A3 south-west to the international ferry port, or the A2047, which takes you to the middle and south of the island. The easternmost road crossing takes you south from the A27 across the creek on the A2030, which travels down the east of Portsea Island before turning inland to the middle and south of the island.

The A3(M) brings traffic from London and the north. This joins the A27 bringing traffic from the east. Travelling west along the A27 from the A3(M) junction takes you to all three road bridges. You can choose which to use depending on your destination, and traffic conditions.

Ferries to the Channel Islands, France, and Spain depart from the international ferry port, and also a number of cruise ships. The best route to this ferry port is via the M275. Car ferries to the Isle of Wight leave, however, about 3 miles further south from the Gunwharf Ferry Terminal in Old Portsmouth. To reach this ferry terminal you should stay on the M275 past junction 2 and continue along the A3 to the Cambridge Junction roundabout, before turning right onto St George's Road, then left onto Gunwharf Road. The popular Gunwharf Quays shopping centre can also be reached from Gunwharf Road.

The railway bridge is used by all trains to and from Portsmouth, whether these are travelling east toward Havant, Chichester, Gatwick and Brighton, north via Havant, to Guildford, Woking and London, or west toward Fareham, Winchester and Southampton. Portsea itself has stations at Hilsea, Fratton, Portsmouth Harbour, and Portsmouth and Southsea. Despite the name, Portsmouth and Southsea is a single station, located in the modern city centre near the Cascades Shopping Centre, the Guildhall, Courts, and University. From Portsmouth Harbour station you can join foot passenger ferries to Gosport or the Isle of Wight, walk to the Historic Dockyard, Gunwharf Quays or Old Portsmouth, or take a bus from the nearby interchange called the Hard. Clarence Pier and the Hovertravel terminal are about a mile to the south-east of the Hard, with regular bus connections. There is also a ferry to Hayling Island leaving from the eastern tip of Portsea Island.

You may cross onto and off Portsea Island on foot or bicycle. Pedestrians and cyclists may use the central and eastern road bridges, but not the M275 bridge nor the railway bridge. There are also two separate footbridges crossing Portsbridge Creek which benefit local pedestrians and cyclists.

Navigating the busy entrance to Portsmouth Harbour can be hazardous and small boats must follow the official guidance.

Portsmouth has good bus services covering the whole city, and other towns and cities nearby. The first bus services were in 1919. These expanded after the closure of the tram network. They were mainly operated by a company owned by the Council until deregulation in 1988. Stagecoach and First Bus are currently the main bus operators. There are bus interchanges at the Hard, Queen Street, Commercial Road (north and south), North End, Hilsea Lido, Cosham, the Queen Alexandra Hospital, and by the ferry terminal in Gosport. There is a park and ride system for visitors arriving by car from out of town, with parking off junction 1 of the M275. Coach services to London and other destinations further afield are provided by National Express and Megabus, both of whom operate from the interchange on the Hard.

Further Reading

Portsea Island↗
Langstone Harbour↗
Isle of Wight Ferries↗
Portsmouth Harbour↗
Maps of Portsmouth↗
Trains to Portsmouth↗
Entering Portsmouth Harbour↗
Channel Ferries↗
Public Transport Information↗

Early History of Portsmouth

In around 491 BC a British prince built a fort called Caer Peris in an area we now call Portchester. By 286 AD this had been adopted by the Romans as their Portus Adurni naval station, where they built their own fortifications. In 501 a Saxon called Port is claimed to arrived in "the place called Portesmutha". Viking ships raided the coast of Britain toward the end of the Anglo-Saxon period, starting in the late 700s and continuing until 1066. There was a confrontation with Danish marauders at Portsmouth in 838. A sea battle took place in 896 between 9 new ships commissioned by King Alfred and 6 Danish ships which had been using the Isle of Wight as a base. Alfred's forces were victorious. This battle probably took place near Portsmouth. Portsmouth was however pillaged by Vikings in 1001, part of a cycle of attacks which were followed by re-building.

The 1086 Domesday Book records the existence of manors at Buckland, Copnor, and Fratton on Portsea Island. In the late 1100s Jean de Gisors, a wealthy Norman, bought Buckland Manor from the de Port family. De Gisors then founded a settlement near the entrance to Portsmouth Harbour in an area now known as Old Portsmouth. He also gave land for a chapel, which was dedicated to the recently martyred St Thomas of Canterbury in 1188. Extended over the centuries, this became the parish church, and is now Portsmouth's Anglican Cathedral. The town was granted a royal charter by Richard I in 1194. Later monarchs renewed and extended this via several later charters.

In around 1212, an almshouse and hospice known as Domus Dei was founded by Peter des Roches, Bishop of Winchester, and William of Wrotham, a royal administrator with responsibility for ports. Part of Domus Dei survives as the Royal Garrison Church, although the nave lacks its roof after being bombed in World War II.

Portchester castle was occupied by the Saxons, and was identified as a burh, or defensive fort, in their Burghal Hidage document. Around 1100, a Norman keep was built in the north-west corner of the Roman fort. This was later re-built in stone, perhaps at the same time as St Mary's parish church, which dates back to the 1130s. Henry II took possession of the castle in 1154 when he ascended to the throne following the Anarchy. Both Henry II and King John used the castle regularly. During the baron's rebellion against John it was briefly taken by their French allies in 1216. During its royal period the castle was often in poor condition, before being repaired when war threatened. For example, during the reign of Edward II, over £1,100 was spent on repairs and reinforcements between 1320 and 1326. In 1346, Edward III assembled an army of 15,000 here for his campaign in France, which ended in victory at the battle of Crecy.

Richard I spent most of his life in France, but he landed at Portsmouth on the way to his coronation in 1189. In 1194 after he was ransomed from captivity he summoned an army and a fleet of 100 ships to Portsmouth in support of reclaiming his territories in France. In 1229, Henry III summoned "one of the finest armies that had ever been raised in England" to invade France, although they returned unsuccessfully in 1231. Conflict with France continued sporadically, although commercial activity also grew during this period. In 1324, just before the 100 years war, Edward II commanded all ports on the south coast to send their largest vessels to Portsmouth so they could transport an army to Acquitaine and strengthen its defences, and further fleets were assembled here during

this conflict before setting sail for France. In 1338, however, Portsmouth was attacked and burnt by a French fleet with only St Thomas Church and Domus Dei, both built of stone, surviving. French attacks continued until the 100 years war ended. In 1445 Margaret of Anjou landed in Portsmouth before her marriage to Henry VI.

Portchester remained a royal castle until Charles I sold it in 1632. Henry V stayed at Portchester Castle in 1415 before setting sail with 12,000 soldiers and perhaps 700 ships to campaign in France and fight at Agincourt. Henry VIII visited with Anne Boleyn in 1535, and Elizabeth I stayed at the castle in 1591 and 1603. It was used as a military hospital in 1562–3, and housed prisoners of war in 1665, 1702–12, and during the Napoleonic Wars.

In the 1400s Portsmouth began to overtake Portchester as an economic and military centre and port. To protect Portsmouth from attack, earthworks and temporary fortifications were built during the 1300s. To provide better and more permanent protection, work began 1418 on the first Round Tower. This wooden Round Tower was rebuilt in stone in the 1490s and the Square Tower added. These are the oldest remaining fortifications in Portsmouth. In 1449 the Bishop of Chichester was murdered outside Domus Dei by sailors whose wages had not been paid. In retribution, Portsmouth was excommunicated until 1508.

In 1495 the first recorded dry dock in the world was constructed, the start of the royal dockyard. A number of warships were built here up over the next 50 years. In 1522 the first defensive chain was ordered. This could be raised to protect the harbour entrance between Portsmouth Point and the Blockhouse at Gosport, or lowered to allow a friendly ship free passage. A gun platform now known as the saluting platform was also added during Tudor times carrying cannon to protect the harbour. Other fortifications were also built during Henry VIII's reign, including Southsea Castle, completed in 1544. In 1545 the Battle of the Solent was watched by Henry VIII from Southsea Castle. Although Henry's flagship Mary Rose was lost, the French fleet retreated.

In 1540 Domus Dei was dissolved by Henry VIII and then used as an armoury. In 1563 around a sixth of Portsmouth's population died of the plague. Plague returned in 1625.

During the late 1500s, Sir Walter Raleigh attempted to found a colony at Roanoke, in Virginia. John White set sail from Portsmouth in 1587 hoping to re-found this colony, but failed to find the earlier settlers. He left over 100 new settlers promising to return with supplies but war with Spain prevented him from doing so until 1590 when the settlement had vanished again. A later colonist, John Mason, had a colourful career including piracy. He is credited as founding New Hampshire.

Further Reading

List of events by century↗	History guide↗	A history of Portsmouth↗
Portsmouth history↗	Alfred and the Danes↗	English Channel Raids↗
Raleigh's Colonies↗	John White's Journey↗	John Mason↗
Agincourt Fleet	Hamble Maritime History	Battle of Agincourt

Portsmouth's Naval and Military History from 1600 to 1900

The chronology below provides a selection of notable events from this period. It is at best a partial account. For more details some further on-line reading is provided at the end. Alternatively, there are many books with fuller coverage of Portsmouth's celebrated naval and military history.

In 1628 the unpopular Duke of Buckingham was assassinated at the Greyhound pub in Portsmouth. His murderer, Lieutenant John Felton, had fought in Buckingham's disastrous siege of Saint Martin de Ré and was aggrieved that the Duke was allowed to keep his position. Felton was hanged in London and his body hung in chains from a gibbet in Portsmouth as a warning to others.

In the 1642 Siege of Portsmouth, the Governor, Colonel Goring, held Portsmouth against Parliamentary forces. They blockaded Portsmouth from the sea, took Gosport and Southsea Castle, and fired on his position. Recognising that he could not hold out, Goring threatened to blow up the armoury, and was allowed to surrender and leave Portsmouth unharmed.

Shipbuilding in Portsmouth recommenced in 1650 with the frigate Portsmouth. New dry docks were built, a rope house, workshops and store houses.

In 1658 the domestic buildings of Domus Dei were converted for use as used the Governor's house, and continued in this role until 1814. In 1662 Catherine of Braganza arrived in Portsmouth and married Charles II in Domus Dei. It is rumoured that they had already married in a secret Catholic ceremony.

In 1665 Charles II ordered Bernard de Gomme to reconstruct Portmouth's fortifications. New walls were built with batteries and bastions from which defenders could fire in any direction. A double moat was dug outside the walls. The dockyard was also protected with an earthen rampart and bastions. An earlier fort to protect the crossing over Portsbridge Creek was rebuilt in 1688.

Blockhouse Fort in Gosport dates back to 1431 when Henry VI authorised defences during the Hundred Year's War. It was at one end of the chain strung across the entrance to Portsmouth Harbour from 1522. During the Civil War Parliamentarians fired cannon from Gosport at the Royalists holding Portsmouth Old Town. Following the restoration, Charles II ordered that Gosport should be defended against attack from the land and de Gomme installed two new towers.

In 1691 work began on a new dry dock was commissioned for the Portsmouth dockyard, large enough to accommodate first rate ships of the line. This was constructed on reclaimed land. Edward Dummer, naval engineer, used a novel design with brick and stone steps. This dock, rebuilt in 1789, survives as today's number 5 dock. Dummer also designed two wet docks and a second dry dock, with a tide driven water-wheel to empty it. This dry dock, rebuilt in 1737, survives as today's number 6 dock.

In 1698, Tsar Peter the Great of Russia was visiting Britain to discover better ways to build ships and organise a navy. He was invited to visit Portsmouth and attended a review of the fleet.

Following the building of Dummer's docks, the Royal Navy established a permanent base at HM Dockyard, Portsmouth. This was enclosed by a brick wall between 1704 and 1712. The Long Row terrace of houses for senior officers was built between 1715 and 1719, and the Short Row in 1787. In 1733 a Royal Naval Academy was established to train officer cadets.

In the mid 1700s new defences protected the whole of Portsea Island. Portsbridge Fort was rebuilt and protected by earthen ramparts called the Hilsea Lines in 1756–7. Fort Cumberland, Lumps Fort and Eastney Battery were built to protect Langstone Harbour and Eastney Beach.

The period from 1688 to 1815 involved continuing conflict, mainly with France, which some have called the second 100 year's war. This period includes the Nine Year's War, the War of Spanish Succession, the War of Austrian Succession, the Carnatic Wars, the Seven Year's War, the American Revolution, the French Revolution, and the Napoleonic Wars. During the rest of the 1800s, there continued to be other wars, for example in the Crimea, India, China, and South Africa, and these were followed in the 1900s by the two World Wars. The navy required large numbers of sailors, and during periods of war "press gangs" were allowed to impress "eligible men of seafaring habits between the ages of 18 and 55 years", starting in 1664 up until 1815. Many sailors died of diseases such as scurvy, or deserted, so this controversial method of "recruitment" continued.

Gosport's defences were also improved. Blockhouse Fort was re-built in 1708, the oldest fortifications still present on this side of Portsmouth Harbour. To protect Portsmouth from the real risk of explosion, a new powder magazine was built at Priddy's Hard in 1771. In 1821 Clarence Yard was established for victualling Royal Navy ships, including Wyatt's brewery. New and improved defences continued to be installed around Gosport during the 1700s and 1800s. Inevitably, the population of Gosport expanded, and during the 1800s, new housing was developed at Alverstoke and New Town. A line of Palmerston Forts was added to Gosport's defences in the 1850s. In the 1900s the Submarine Service were housed near the Blockhouse Fort.

In 1711, the HMS Edgar (launched in 1668) exploded while anchored at Spithead with perhaps 500 lives lost. The officers were on shore at the time, and the sailors had been re-positioning gunpowder on the ship, which probably caused the catastrophic accident.

In 1740 Admiral Anson was sent to harass Spanish ships around South America. He set off with 8 ships and 1854 men, and returned in 1744 with just one ship and 188 men, but over £90,000 of captured treasure. They had crossed the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian Oceans, passing both Cape Horn and the Cape of Good Hope in Africa before crossing the Atlantic Ocean a second time to return to Spithead.

In 1749 eight men were executed in Portsmouth for a mutiny off Africa on the HMS Chesterfield. In 1756/7 Admiral Byng was court martialled and executed. In 1758 the captured French ships Foudroyant and Orpheus landed with 1,000 prisoners who were kept in in Portchester Castle. In 1759 the body of General Wolfe was brought back from Canada and he was buried with full honours.

In 1762 the Spanish treasure ship Hermione was captured by HMS Active and Favourite. The Hermione's cargo included gold coins, gold and silver ingots. The treasure was landed at Portsmouth Point, and conveyed through the town under military escort, then conveyed to the Tower of London via St James' Palace, where it was viewed by the royal family. A total of over £500,000 was shared between the officers and crew, with the two captains receiving over £65,000 each, and each ordinary seamen around £485, about 30 years salary.

A programme of expansion and modernisation starting in 1761 allowed the Dockyard to support larger ships. By 1774, the North Corner was established on reclaimed land for shipbuilding with sawpits and wood seasoning sheds. Earlier wooden structures such as the storehouses were rebuilt in brick and the deep canal, or camber, was rebuilt in Portland stone. The Great Ropehouse, the sixth since 1665, was set fire by an arsonist in 1776, but rope-making continued on site until 1868 with hemp and tarring houses to support this process. In 1784 a house was built for the Dockyard Commissioner, St Ann's Church in 1787, and a new smithy in 1791 to make anchors.

In 1779 Admiral Keppel was tried at the Governor's house. In 1782 the Royal George sank off Spithead with the loss of around 900 lives. In 1787 the First Fleet departed for Australia with 11 ships and around 1400 men, arriving 250 days later at Botany Bay, the first penal colony and British settlement on Australia. William Dawes was an astronomer and surveyor on this fleet. That same year, the famous Bounty departed from Portsmouth. In 1792 some of the mutineers are returned to Portsmouth, where 3 were executed. In 1797 the Spithead mutiny demanded better pay and working conditions, including compensation for sickness and injury.

In 1796 Samuel Bentham was appointed Inspector General of Naval Works and instituted further rebuilding, including new stone docks, completed in 1802–3 using Smeaton's waterproof cement, and a ship caisson to close and open the basin. Steam engines were installed to drive saws and woodworking machinery. In 1802 the Portsmouth Block Mills were built to manufacture pulley blocks using a fifteen step process designed by Marc Brunel, father of the more famous Isambard Kingdom Brunel. Bentham also constructed Metal Mills for re-cycling the copper cladding used to protect ships' hulls. By 1800 the Dockyard was the largest industrial complex in the world. In 1815, a School of Naval Architecture was established.

The Napoleonic Wars lasted from 1803 to 1815. During 1805 the English fleet under Nelson had been chasing the French fleet under Admiral Villeneuve, crossing and re-crossing the Atlantic. Finally the French were blockaded in Cadiz, while Nelson had shore leave. Nelson left Portsmouth on his flagship the Victory in 15th September 1805. The French fleet had gathered in Cadiz with 33 ships of the line, including 15 contributed by the Spanish. By 21st of October the British fleet had 27 ships of the line. The French fleet was ordered by Napoleon to sail to Naples and left Cadiz on 18th October, but with light wind they decided on the 21st to return. The British fleet was able to engage them, just off the Cape of Trafalgar, around midday. Nelson sent his famous signal "England expects that every man will do his duty" at the start of the battle. Despite being outnumbered and outgunned, Nelson's two columns were able to split the line of the French fleet

and overwhelm them. Nelson himself, however, was hit by a fatal shot from a French musket. Victory returned to Portsmouth with Nelson's body in December 1805 and is now a museum ship.

In 1807 troops landing in Portsmouth after the retreat to Corunna included 2,600 ill and injured, of whom 340 passed away. Despite this defeat, British forces continued to assist Spain and Portugal to fight back against French invaders. This campaign was successful thanks to a) Nelson's victory at the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805, after which the Royal Navy could travel safely between Britain and the Iberian Peninsular, bringing fresh troops and supplies, and fetching back the sick and wounded, b) French supplies by contrast had to cross the Pyrenees and contend with guerilla action by local resistance forces, c) careful military planning by Wellington ensured there were no further significant losses, and d) French troops eventually withdrawn to fight in other regions. Napoleon escaped exile on Elba in 1814, and fought against British and Prussian armies again at Waterloo.

In 1821 the Royal Marine Artillery were transferred from Chatham to Portsmouth. In 1848 the Royal Marine base was transferred from Portsmouth to Gosport. Steam powered ships necessitated further expansion of the dockyard. In 1843 more land was reclaimed to create a seven-acre basin and a factory for marine steam engines. The yard built and repaired boilers and assembling completed engines. In 1852 a Great Steam Smithery was opened, in 1861 a larger Iron Foundry, and in 1867 an Armour Plate Workshop for metal work such as punching, shearing and heavy turning. More dry docks and basins were built for repair, rigging, fitting out, and re-fueling of steam ships. A gun-mounting workshop, built in 1881, produced gun turrets and torpedos.

In 1852 the troopship Birkenhead sailed from Portsmouth to South Africa. She was wrecked off Danger Point, South Africa. Around 450 lives were lost, many from Portsmouth. In 1858 Queen Victoria distributed 12 Victoria Cross medals on Southsea Common with 20,000 spectators including all troops stationed at Portsmouth. In 1875, an expedition to the Arctic led by Sir George Nares set off in the Alert and Discovery.

In 1876, there was a boiler explosion on the HMS Thunderer, killing 15 instantly and injuring 70, of whom 30 later died. Memorials commemorating this event can be found in Kingston Cemetery and the Naval Cemetery in Haslar, Gosport.

Further Reading

Charles II Wedding↗
Press Gangs↗
Captain Richard Dacres↗
Admiral Keppel↗
Battle of Trafalgar↗
Victoria Crosses↗
William Dawes↗
Portsmouth Fortifications↗
Peter the Great↗
Anson's Voyage↗
Royal George↗
HMS America↗
Peninsular War↗
HMS Thunderer↗
HMS Bounty↗
Hilsea Lines↗
HM Naval Base↗
HMS Chesterfield↗
Admiral Byng↗
Horatio Nelson↗
HMS Birkenhead↗
First Australia Fleet↗
George Nares↗

Naval and Military History from 1900

Vosper & Company was founded in 1871 by Herbert Edward Vosper, based in Portsmouth. The firm initially focussed on repairing and refitting ships before venturing into building small craft, ship's boilers and engines at the turn of the century, and during World War I. After that they retrenched to repair work then in the 1930s they focussed on high speed vessels, moved to a new yard in Portchester, and built including Malcolm Campbell's record-breaking Bluebird K4. During World War II they built small Motor Torpedo Boats and Motor Gun Boats for the Royal Navy. These boats were used to rescue crew from aircraft ditched in the water, for patrols, and also high speed attacks. After the war they started producing larger vessels such as frigates. In 1966 they merged with Southampton's Thornycroft company to form Vosper Thornycroft, who continued trade in Southampton until 2003 when shipbuilding was relocated to Portsmouth. In 2008/9 the VT Group was taken over by BAE Systems who built the Queen Elizabeth and Prince of Wales aircraft carriers.

In 1904 Captain Scott and the crew of the Discovery were given a banquet at the Guildhall. In 1913 suffragettes set fire to the dockyard, which still had many wooden buildings. Two sailors were in the industrial area. Around £200,000 of damage were caused.

The yard was electrified in 1906. Docks and basins were extended to allow ever larger ships to be built. In 1906 HMS Dreadnought, the first of a new class of battleships designed by locally educated Sir Phillip Watts, was built and launched at Portsmouth. The 1912 review at Spithead included 223 warships. Two more dreadnoughts are built and launched at Portsmouth in 1909 and 1913, and the 27,500 ton battleship Royal Sovereign in 1915. The 1916 Battle of Jutland saw the British and German dreadnought fleets close in on each other, but without a conclusive outcome.

At the start of World War I, dock number 14 was over 720 foot long, more than 220 metres. In 1900 Portsmouth Dockyard employed 8,000 people, and this increased to 23,000 in World War I. The dockyard was kept busy re-fitting and repairing around 1,200 existing ships.

Some 6,000 people with Portsmouth connections died during this war. The Cenotaph in Guildhall Square commemorates about 5,000 of them. Hundreds of former pupils from Portsmouth Grammar School joined up. The stories of two of them illustrate conditions during this conflict. James Yates was educated at Portsmouth before moving to Kent, and later become a teacher himself. James volunteered after one his pupils was killed in 1915. James was sent to France at the end of the year, where he was also killed in action. His book of war poetry, War Lyrics, was published posthumously in 1921. His friend, Joseph Courtney, published his poem An Englishman as an epitaph to James. Cecil Proctor was another Portsmouth Grammar School pupil, an actor with his own touring theatre company. Cecil was a member of the Unity Church and applied to be exempted from military service because of his religious beliefs. This request was finally successful on appeal, but only after Cecil had been conscripted, court martialled because he refused to serve, and jailed. After the war Cecil returned to Portsmouth where he directed and starred in pantomimes to raise money for children's charities, and also put on concerts for serving troops. The remembrance centre on the Hilsea Lines displays artefacts and memorabilia from World War I, and has a walk-through reconstruction of a war-time trench.

There was a period of contraction after World War I, although the dockyard continued to build cruises and destroyers. A Steel Foundry was added in 1926.

A number of fortifications had been constructed in the mid 1800s following the 1859 Royal Commission on the Defence of the UK. So-called Palmerston Forts were built along the line of Portsdown Hill, in the Solent off Portsmouth, in Gosport, and on the Isle of Wight. The Hilsea Lines and Fort Cumberland were also upgraded. Although the threatened invasion from France never came, some of these forts were used to host air defences during World War II, when Portsmouth was a major target for German bombers. In World War II destroyer flotillas were vital in the Battle of the Atlantic, and the dockyard also again played an important repair and re-fit role.

The plane company Airspeed Limited moved from York to a site at the newly constructed Portsmouth Airport in 1933. Their manager, Nevil Shute, was also a famous author. In 1940 they became a subsidiary of de Haviland. During World War II they built transport aircraft and military gliders. By 1951 de Havilland decided to close them down, however.

World War II took place in the air, at sea and on land. Portsmouth was bombed repeatedly between 1940 and 1944. Damage caused by bombing shrapnel can still be seen in the historic dockyard. A map showing all bomb sites was created by the city's Air Raid Precaution (ARP) service after the war, and can be seen at the Portsmouth History Centre in the central library. There is a digital version online of this map, created for the 80th anniversary of D Day. Around 930 people were killed during the Blitz, over 1,000 hospitalised, and 20% of the city's houses were heavily damaged or destroyed. Some residents sheltered in tunnels dug into Portsdown Hill. Anti-aircraft guns were located on the top of Portsdown Hill and the south west of Hayling Island. Decoy sites were located around Langstone Harbour, lighting fires to lure bombers away from their targets in the city. Radar stations were located at Ventnor on the Isle of Wight and in Poling, West Sussex.

The Battle of the Atlantic was a campaign to control the ocean so that convoys could bring supplies to Britain and support the war effort in Europe. Supply convoys mostly headed to western ports such as Liverpool. Escort ships and the fleet air arm helped to keep them safe from submarine attack. Large war-ships avoided Portsmouth to avoid being bombed but the docks continued to maintain smaller vessels. Motor Torpedo Boat 71, part of the Night Hunters exhibition at the Explosion Museum in Gosport, was built in Portsmouth by Vosper in 1939. She was joined the flotillas patrolling coastal waters around Britain. The museum also houses Coastal Torpedo Boat 331, built by Thornycroft in Southampton and based at Haslar during World War 2.

The land war started to turn in Britain's favour in 1942 when the US entered the war, General Montgomery won the battle of El Alamein, and the Russians won the battle of Stalingrad. Preparation and planning for the allied invasion of Europe was a long slow process. The unsuccessful Dieppe Raid in 1942 demonstrated that specialised equipment would be needed to make a successful attack on a well-defended site. This included artificial harbours, tanks adapted for beach landings, and tactical airforce support. A number of designs were considered for

artificial harbours, Mulberry harbours were chosen, and construction started in 1943 in locations around Britain. Adapted tanks called Hobart's Funnies included amphibious duplex drive vehicles, armoured bulldozing vehicles, and Churchill crocodile flame throwers. New designs for Landing Craft Assault vehicles were also produced, some of them at the Admiralty Experimental Works at Haslar. The larger Landing Ship Tank could carry 13 tanks, 20 other vehicles and 200 troops. They could also carry five Landing Craft Assault vessels. Portsmouth's Airspeed designed a wooden glider called the Horsa capable of carrying 30 troops. The first 695 were built at Airspeed's Christchurch factory and later ones by contractors nationwide, including furniture manufacturers.

Access to sea seafront was restricted from 1943 and from April 1944 Portsmouth was part of the 10 mile coastal zone in the south of England closed to all visitors. Troops were camped in woods to the north and east of Portsmouth, and kept in from May 26th for final briefings. In the run-up to D-day, troops and vessels boarded ships at the Naval Base, the Hard, Gunwharf, South Parade Pier, and Beach Street and the Hardway in Gosport. Ravelin House was the headquarters for Brigadier Montgomery, Commercial Buildings on Lord Montgomery Way was the headquarters for the British troops who landed on Sword beach, and Quay House on Broad Street was the embarkation headquarters for the Portsmouth area. Mulberry harbours were constructed in Langstone Harbour and a Phoenix caisson can still be seen at the entrance where it ran aground and broke up. Stokes Bay was also used for Mulberry harbour construction, and some troops were embarked there onto Landing Ship Tanks which beached there.

The Underground Headquarters (UGHQ) for Operation Overlord was in a network of tunnels excavated 30 metres below Fort Southwick in 1942. A Plotting Room was set up there to track the locations of ships crossing to the 1944 D-Day landings. According to First Officer Audrey Parker, the Commander in Chief, Admiral Ramsay, directed the British Task Force, half the American Task Force, subsequent cross channel convoys, and anti-U boat patrols. After the landings there were 12 convoys a night on average, each with around 6 escort vessels. German U-Boats continued to operate in the English channel after D-Day and Deputy Staff Operations Officer Parker had to organise the Portsmouth Escort Force, comprising up to 60 destroyers, frigates, sloops and corvettes and 40 trawlers.

Five sectors of the Normandy coast were chosen for the landings, code named Utah and Omaha, where American forces landed, and Gold, Juno and Sword, targets for UK and Commonwealth forces. There was one fleet for each beach, with soldiers and transport ships based Portsmouth, Southampton, Poole, and other well defended locations along the south coast. They first sailed to an area of sea south of Spithead and the Isle of Wight known as Area Z or "Piccadilly Circus" before heading to their target beach along a channel known as the Spout. Support vessels including minesweepers and transport for follow-up forces formed auxiliary fleets. The first troops began boarding on 31st May. On 1st June bombardment warships set sail from Scapa Flow, Belfast and the Clyde. The landing was originally scheduled for 5th June but was delayed one day by bad weather. Troops had to wait on their ships until they departed. Early on 5th June it was decided the weather was good enough, and troops convoys begin to set off, with minesweepers clearing their passage. Just after midnight on the 6th, five Horsa gliders landed troops to seize the Caen canal and Orne

River crossings, cutting off this route to German armoured vehicles. Previous special operations had deceived the Germans into thinking the invasion would take place further east, so their defences were fewer and slower to react. Nonetheless the beaches were well defended and dangerous to assault. Heavy naval bombardment started around 5am to subdue the coastal guns and artillery defences. The landings began at dawn on the 6th, in low tide, with a full moon.

Around 175,000 men from 15 countries were involved in the first day's assault, and 6833 ships, including 1,213 from the Royal Navy. Allied aircraft flew 14,000 sorties, preventing German planes from bombing the fleet. Aerial bombing helped to pin down auxiliary defending forces and counter-attacking German tanks. Only one allied ship was lost, sunk by a fast moving German torpedo boat. In all around 23,000 troops landed by glider or parachute behind the coastal defences, subdued some defences, and captured the town of Sainte-Mère-Eglise. By the end of the day, there were over 10,000 allied casualties, including 4,400 confirmed deaths, most of them US troops on Omaha beach. The allies had established five beach-heads, and linked up Juno and Sword. They were able to link all five by 12th June, although it took until 26th June to capture Cherbourg, the most important port in the region, and 21st July to take Caen, the largest city in Lower Normandy. It is estimated that around 1,000 German troops were killed during D-Day.

All Portsmouth hospitals were used to treat wounded troops after D-Day, as did Haslar Hospital in Gosport. Portsmouth Royal Naval Memorial commemorates almost 15,000 sailors who were based in the city but died at sea and have no known grave. There are 611 World War II graves in Gosport's Haslar Cemetery, 234 in Milton Cemetery, and 190 in Kingston Cemetery.

After World War II the dockyard was initially busy refitting and modernising existing ships. Around 16,000 workers were still employed during the 1950s and early 60s but after that there was a period of contraction. The railway system, started in 1843, had 27 miles of track by 1952. It was cut off from the main line in 1977 and locomotives stopped operating in 1978. In 1982 a fleet of 69 naval vessels and eighteen merchant ships sailed from Portsmouth to the Falkland Islands, returning the following year. In 1984 the dockyard function was downsized and renamed HM Naval Base. This base is to the north of the historic royal dockyard, which is now a tourist site.

Around 40% of Portsmouth's grade I and II* listed buildings are in the historic dockyard, which is now one of Portsmouth's most popular attractions. There are still around 17,000 direct or indirect naval employees in Portsmouth, and around two thirds of the Royal Navy's surface ships are based there, which you see in passing if you take a ferry or cruise ship from the international ferry port.

Further Reading

Robert Scott↗	HMS Dreadnought↗	Portsdown Forts↗
Bomb Map↗	Blitz History↗	Soldier & Pacifist↗
Remembrance Centre↗	Underground HQ↗	Royal Navy D Day↗
D Day Armada↗	D Day History↗	D Day Connections↗

Civil History of Portsmouth from 1700 to 1850

The 1716 list of public houses, brandy shops and coffee houses shows that the High Street and nearby streets had 24 pubs, five brandy shops, and four coffee shops. The 1898 Street Directory shows a mixture of private houses, small businesses, professionals, civic and military buildings, and two consulates, with just one brewer and two beer retailers. The area was gentrified over these two centuries. Buckingham House, on the High Street, illustrates this process. It is named after Duke of Buckingham who was murdered there in 1628. It is currently operated as a guest house, but was the Spotted Dog pub at the time of the infamous incident. It was later owned by Dr William Smith, who died in 1732 and left money for the founding of Portsmouth Grammar School.

Despite the expansion of the dockyard and Portsmouth's strategic significance, travel from London was difficult and dangerous. Between Petersfield and Portsmouth travellers had to pass through the Forest of Bere and cross the South Downs, and were vulnerable to robbers and highwaymen. The roads, moreover, were in poor condition. Up until the turnpike acts, local parishes were responsible for repairs. This system was notoriously ineffective on busy main routes. Three small villages, for example, were responsible for maintaining the road up Butser Hill, the main London to Portsmouth route, now the A3: Buriton, Nursted, and Weston. In the 1690s, rates were imposed on these villages to cover the cost of repairs. A 1706 petition to Parliament resulted in a turnpike road opening in 1711. In this system, users of the road paid tolls, which were used to keep it in good repair. For example a horse rider might pay one penny and a stagecoach with four horses might pay one shilling. The turnpike trust improved the road by acquiring land to shorten the route, and also lowering it by some 60 feet. Stagecoaches increased in speed and frequency. Highwaymen also increased in number, and coaches carried guards with blunderbusses and cutlasses. By the end of the 1700s, the fare to London was £1 and 1 shilling inside, or half that for travelling outside. Smuggling was also rife, apparently, taking advantage of the nearby port and access to ready marInkets to the north via the improved roads. Once the railways began operating, however, stagecoach travel declined and the income from tolls. The turnpike trust was wound up in 1871. Responsibility for the roads now fell on the newly formed Hampshire County Council.

In 1725 a parish workhouse was built at the northern end of Warblington Street. A parliamentary report from 1777 states that 200 inmates could be accommodated. Another workhouse was also built at the corner of Elm Lane, Landport. This could house 210 inmates in 1777, but was rebuilt in 1798, and enlarged in 1835. By 1846 the two workhouses had a total of 640 inmates. A new combined workhouse was opened in St Mary's Road in 1846 and enlarged in 1881–3. The site was later renamed St Mary's Hospital, which continues as a Community Health Campus. Children's accommodation was opened at Cosham in 1931, but closed in 1968 and demolished in 2015.

Convicts could transported abroad to reduce pressure on prisons and to help expand British colonies. Between 50,000 and 120,000 prisoners were shipped to the Americas between 1610 until the American Revolution in 1776. Prisoners were then housed in prison ships, often naval hulks which had seen out their useful service. Hulks were already used to house new recruits while they were being trained. The 1776 criminal law act expanded the use of prison ships. Convicts were expected to work on menial naval tasks during the day, and sleep on low wooden

platforms at night, in chains. By 1788 the prison ship Lion was moored off Gosport and Ceres and La Fortunee in Langstone Harbour. In 1787 transportation resumed, now to Australia, so some prisoners were simply being held before being shipped abroad. Conditions on prison ships were very poor, with many dying of disease or despair. An Inspector of Hulks was appointed in 1802, and he banned officers from keeping pigs or poultry on board. Convict quarters were divided into cells by 1817. Finally, sufficient capacity was created in land-based prisons and the last prison ships were withdrawn from service in 1857. During this period a total of 35 prison ships were recorded based at Gosport, Portsmouth or Langstone Harbour. HM Prison Kingston was built in 1877 and its uses include as a boy's borstal establishment and later for prisoners with life sentences. It was closed in 2014 and is being redeveloped for housing.

Transportation to Australia continued from 1787 to 1868. The last convicts arrived there in 1868, by which time around 162,000 had been shipped out. The First Fleet, led by Commodore Arthur Phillip, departed from Portsmouth in May 1787 taking 1400 prisoners and crew on 6 convict ships, 3 store ships, and 2 royal navy escorts. The fleet arrived in Botany Bay in January 1788. About 50 people had died, and 20 were born en route. The fleet moved on from Botany Bay to a more suitable site at Port Jackson in modern day Sydney, landing on 26th January, Australia Day.

Portsmouth has a tradition of non-conformism. Portsmouth has seen regular protests in Portsmouth against low pay for dockyard workers, in support of the suffragette movement, and against fascism in Britain. Sir John Carter, a member of a dissenting family, successfully negotiated with aggrieved parties in some of these situations. Benjamin Burgess was appointed vicar of St Thomas church in 1658, and supported the Parliamentary cause. After the restoration of the monarchy, however, an Act of Uniformity was passed in 1662, restricting freedom of worship. Burgess refused to adhere to the new guidelines, was removed from his position, and jailed for drawing the inhabitants into non-conformity. The 1672 Declaration of Indulgence allowed Burgess to obtain a license to preach, and did so in Penny Street and in the High Street, helping to establish the Unitarian Church, which is still based in the High Street. The current church is named after John Pounds. Pounds was born in 1766 and originally worked in the dockyard, but was disabled in by a fall in his med-teens and became a shoemaker. He sought out poor children, provided them with food and clothing, and an education. He would get the children to read from the Bible, taught them arithmetic, cooking, carpentry and shoe-making, as well as taking them on nature rambles. When he died in 1839 he was famous and was acclaimed as one of the founders of the "Ragged Schools" movement, which provided free education to destitute children during the 1800s.

By the end of the 1600s, housing was starting to appear outside the dockyard and north of the original old town. Number 90 St Georges Square was built for a wealthy merchant. The governor of the dockyard was not keen on this area being developed in case it weakened his defences. Dockyard workers appealed to Queen Anne's husband and she granted them permission to build houses near where they worked. Prince George Street and Queen Street commemorate their support. Other street names remember events in the 1700s, Union Street after the 1707 Act of Union, Hanover Street after the Hanoverian Kings, North Street after Lord North, prime minister from 1770–82, and so on. In 1792 the new suburb, originally Portsmouth Common, was renamed

Portsea. In the 1801 census, 25,000 people lived in Portsea, cf only 7,000 in Old Portsmouth. By the 1900s Portsea housing was in poor condition. Portsmouth's first council houses were built there in 1912 and after a notorious murder in Blossom Alley in 1923 more slums were demolished.

Portsmouth has one of the oldest Jewish communities in Britain, with its first synagogue dating to 1746. The cemetery, acquired in 1749, is off a road which has been known for more than 200 years as Jews' Lane. The current Portsmouth and Southsea Synagogue is on The Thicket.

William Pike was born in 1691, worked in a brewer's apprentice, and by 1732 had his own business, with three licensed houses. In 1747 he bought a distillery in Queen Street in partnership with Samuel Spicer. Pike retained control of the brewery and by 1777, when died, he owned 58 public houses on Portsea Island and 8 in Gosport. The business continued to be run by the family, and expanded through the early 1800s. Pike Spicer and Co owned half the licensed premises in Portsmouth and a few more elsewhere. In 1864 their brewery was destroyed by a major fire. In 1889 they converted into a limited company. The Brickwood family bought all their public houses in Gosport, and began buying breweries in Portsmouth itself. In 1899 they acquired the Catherine Brewery in Catherine Row and rebuilt this as the Portsmouth Brewer. Faced with this competition, Pike Spicer merged with Brickwoods in 1910. Brickwoods were bought by Whitbreads in 1971.

Banking started in number 46 on the High Street with the opening of Grant and Burbey's business in 1787. Grant, Gilman & Long then began operating from number 60, until in 1888 they merged with Maddison's Southampton bank to form Grant and Madison's Union Banking company. This was taken over by Lloyds bank in 1903. In 1955 Lloyds moved to number 31 in the High Street, but this closed in 1998 leaving the High Street without a bank. Godwin, Minchin and Carter began operating their bank at number 2 on the Grand Parade in the 1790s. Bank failures were not unknown at this time. The Gosport Bank failed in 1810, Burridges Bank in 1814, and there was a run on all banks in 1815. In 1818 Minchin, Carter & Kelly failed and the business was wound up. The Hampshire Banking Company opened in 1863 and merged with the Capital and Counties Bank who were operating at 31, the High Street, in 1883. This bank too was later subsumed into Lloyds. It seems that larger banks were safer, more reliable, and more successful than small, local ones.

The first Portsmouth Guide was published in 1775 by Dr Lake Taswell. He updated this in 1790. His grandson, Lake Allen, produced his History of Portsmouth in 1817. This includes a description of the allied sovereigns' meeting in the Governor's House in 1814. The streets were lined with troops and cannon were fired as the Prince Regent arrived from London by carriage. The Emperor of Russia and his wife, the King of Prussia and his sons, and several other courtiers and aristocrats joined this meeting, celebrating the (first) defeat of Napoleon. The event continued for four days, and included tours of the dockyards, royal salutes, sailing trips, and a royal dinner for 120 guests.

Charles Chubb and his brother began trading in Daniel Street in 1804, specialising in customised ironwork for the Navy. They produced locks to prevent pilfering and improve security on board prison ships. In 1818 they invented the Detector lock which was nationally recognised as a premier

product. The brothers moved manufacturing to Wolverhampton. Charles Chubb and Company continued trading from 119 Queen Street until 1835. The Chubb name is still recognised today.

There were a number of proposals to connect London and Portsmouth by canal, particularly during periods of war when the English Channel was unsafe. The rivers Wey and Arun were connected by a canal which opened in 1816. This created a route from London to Arundel. A canal from Ford, south of Arundel, to Chichester, and on to Portsmouth was completed in 1823. By then, however, peace was well established and it was cheaper once again to send goods by sea. The canal across Portsea Island was abandoned in 1830. The Locks Sailing Club on Langstone Harbour is next door to the old Milton Locks, whose remains still exist. You can also still walk along the Chichester canal from Chichester Marina to the old canal wharf and heritage centre.

By 1800 the population had outgrown the capacity of the original town and the nearby Portsea. Starting in 1809, the suburb of Croxton Town was built to the east. This is now known as Southsea, after its Henry VIII Castle. Houses were built for skilled workers in Silver Street, Nickel Street, and the middle classes in King's Terrace and Hampshire Terrace. By the 1860s Southsea had expanded along Clarence Road to Granada Road. Nearby more working class houses were built on land owned by Mr Somers, in an area known as Somerstown, including Fawcett Road and Lawrence Road. Part of Southsea Common was created on the site of the Great Morass.

During the 1800s, Southsea became a place "where the elite and beauty of the neighbourhood congregated, listened to the band, bathed, danced, talked scandal and fashion, and read the newspapers". Hollingsworth Assembly Rooms had various names, including the King's Rooms after a royal visit. In 1830 the Portsmouth, Portsea and Gosport Herald wrote: "the assemblies during the past winter seem to have given more general satisfaction than those of any former season".

In 1845, the last English duel took place in Gosport. Lieutenant Hawkey and Captain Seton quarrelled at Hollingsworth's Rooms in Southsea. Hawkey was offended that Seton was too intimate with his wife, and challenged him to a duel. At the time, duelling was out of favour and indeed illegal since 1819, so they met on Browndown Common to the west of Gosport. Seton was shot and could not be saved. Hawkey was found guilty of wilful murder at the inquest but acquitted at the Winchester assize. He was nonetheless court-martialled.

Further Reading

1716 Pub List↗	1898 High Street↗		Buckingham House↗
Riots in Portsmouth↗	Sir John Carter↗		Benjamin Burgess
History of Portsea	Jewish Portsmouth		Buriton Stage Coaches
London-Portsmouth Canal	Prison Ships		First Fleet
Portsea Workhouses	John Pounds		Ragged Schools
Pike Spicer	Portsmouth Banking		Charles Chubb
Early Historians	Allied Sovereigns	Last Duel	History of Southsea

Civil History of Portsmouth from 1850

Trains arrived in Portsmouth from three directions. The London and Southwest Railway (LSWR) built a line which left the Southampton line at Bishopstoke (now called Eastleigh) travelling via Fareham to Gosport. This route, a distance of 89 miles from London, opened in 1841. A ferry across the harbour entrance then provided a connection to Portsmouth. The London, Brighton and South Coast Railway (LBSCR) then built a line connecting to Portsmouth via Chichester to Brighton, providing an even longer route of 95 miles, which opened in 1847. In 1848 LSWR built a connecting line from Fareham to Cosham, providing a route to Portsmouth from the west. In 1859 LSWR completed a more direct route leaving the Southampton line at Woking and then travelling via Guildford and Havant to reach Portsmouth. This resulted in a journey of 73 miles from London, which remains the most direct rail route to this day. The railway from Fareham to Gosport closed to passengers in 1953, but the other lines mentioned above remain in use.

Up to 1840, passengers were ferried between Portsmouth and Gosport by watermen with rowing boats carrying up to 8 passengers. A steam ferry, or floating bridge, started that year. This was 100 foot long and 40 feet wide, and could transport horses and carriages as well as foot passengers. It operated every 15 minutes for 14 hours per day. When the railway arrived in Gosport, the watermen invested in their own steam launches. When the railway to Portsmouth Station was extended down to Portsmouth Harbour station alongside the Hard in 1876 passengers from Gosport could join a direct train to London straight from their ferry. Competition continued until 1961 when the two surviving companies merged to form the Portsmouth Harbour Ferry Company.

In 1420 the Manor of Ashey on the Isle of Wight was responsible for boats crossing between Portsmouth and Ryde. In the 1600s fishermen at Ryde took turns to provide daily crossings. Depending on the tide, sailing boats had to moor a long way off shore, which was inconvenient for passengers who had to cross the sands or be carried across. Ryde Pier was built in 1814 to solve this problem. A steam ferry operated briefly between Portsmouth and Ryde in 1817 but the first regular service started in 1825. In the 1880s the railway companies bought up the ferry companies and began operating these services themselves as an extension of their railway networks. Ferries to the Isle of Wight have run from Stokes Bay near Gosport and Clarence Pier, but the only car ferry service is now provided by Wightlink from its Gunwharf Ferry Port to Fishbourne Terminal, 4 miles from Ryde. Foot passengers can travel directly to Ryde on a fast catamaran from Portsmouth Harbour Station or a faster hovercraft from the Hovertravel terminal near Clarence Pier.

Clarence Esplanade was built using convict labour in the mid 1800s, and Clarence Pier opened in 1861. Pump rooms and baths were built nearby Clarence Pier. The first large hotel, the Grade II listed Portland, designed by Thomas Ellis Owen, was in 1847. During the 1860s the Queens Hotel, Pier Hotel and Beach Mansions Hotel all opened. Southsea Parade Pier opened in 1879. Though it caught fire in 1974 during the filming of Tommy, it has since been repaired and restored as a pleasure pier, and re-opened in 2017.

In 1885 a new railway line opened connecting Fratton to a station in Southsea. For the first few years the line was popular and profitable. By 1901, however, the town's tram service was

electrified, providing a competitive alternative. The last train along the Southsea line ran in 1914. In 1925 the main station on Portsea Island was renamed from Portsmouth Town to Portsmouth and Southsea.

Horse drawn trams had been running in Portsmouth since 1840 with a horse drawn service connecting Southsea and North End via Commercial Road and the Dockyard. In 1865 tram rails were installed between Portsmouth Town Station and Clarence Pier. By 1892 there were around 14 miles of tram routes serviced by around 60 tram cars and 250 horses. In 1899 Portsmouth Corporation (the council) took over these services and began to electrify them, doubling the length of tram rails by 1905. Trams were gradually replaced by buses after World War I and the last Portsmouth tram ran in 1936. A few tram rails are still visible in Broad Street, Old Portsmouth.

Sarah Robinson was born in 1834 and became involved in the temperance movement. In 1864 she visited Portsmouth for the first time and held a temperance meeting at the New Barracks in Gosport. In 1866 she started campaigning for funds to create a temperance institute for Portsmouth's soldiers and sailors. In 1873 Sarah bought the former Fountain Hotel in the High Street. The Soldier's Institute opened in 1874. It was handed over to the YMCA in 1911. Badly damaged in World War II it was demolished in 1971. In 1850 a sailor's home was established on Queen Street to accommodate sailors between periods of service. It was visited by Prince Albert in 1855, after which Queen Victoria became patron. Badly damaged in World War II it was re-built in 1952. It is now the Royal Maritime Hotel.

Portsmouth features in Jane Austen's novel, Mansfield Park, as the home town of Fanny Price. Jane's brother Sir Francis joined the Royal Navy in 1786 and studied at the Royal Naval Academy. He served in the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, rising to the rank of Admiral. In 1865, he died at his home in Widley and is buried in Wymering. Charles Dickens featured Portsmouth in his 1838/9 novel Nicholas Nickleby. Other writers with Portsmouth links include Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Rudyard Kipling, H G Wells and Nevil Shute. Gilbert and Sullivan's light opera HMS Pinafore is set in Portsmouth Harbour. The historic dockyard featured in a number of movies, including Tomorrow Never Dies.

Portsmouth's University was originally founded in 1869/70 as the Portsmouth and Gosport School of Science and Art. Later names include the Municipal Technical College, Portsmouth College of Technology and Portsmouth Polytechnic before becoming the University of Portsmouth in 1992. The 1908 grade II listed Park Building was the first to be built specifically for the University.

In 1879 Portsmouth Grammar School was re-sited on the High Street and has now expanded into the former Cambridge Barracks next door. The site of these barracks had previously been a carpenter's workshop, timberyard, and warehouses. The barracks provided military accommodation from 1825, were extended in 1856–8, but were no longer needed by 1926. The Grammar School also acquired the neighbouring Clarence Barracks, which were in use 1760–1972.

Lloyds of Portsmouth began trading on Lake Road in the 1890s. Its founder was qualified as a master herbalist. The business sold herbal medicines, offered free advice, and included a dental surgery. Lloyds were one of the first to sell condoms, for which Portsmouth was a good market. By the 1930s Lloyds had opened branches in Bristol and Manchester operated by sons of the founder, Walter Lloyd, while his third son took over the Portsmouth business. The Lake Road premises were bombed in World War II, and the business was taken over by Walter's grandson Bertie. Bertie began selling contraceptives by mail order which, although controversial at the time, proved to be very successful. Lloyds later were the first to offer pregnancy testing by post. By 2007, however, there was too much competition for on-line sales and the business closed.

Voller's Corset Company was started in 1899. Still a family firm, they are one of the oldest corset manufacturers still operating. They employ about 30 people in their Portsmouth factory.

Portsmouth Guildhall, near Portsmouth and Southsea station, was constructed in 1890. It was originally known as the Town Hall, replacing an earlier town hall on the High Street. The Guildhall was largely rebuilt in the 1950s after World War II bombing damage. It is currently used for to host concerts, conferences and weddings.

The Royal Portsmouth, Portsea and Gosport Hospital opened on Commercial Road in 1849, becoming the Royal Portsmouth Hospital in 1866. This included a special ward for prostitutes to be detained by the dockyard police until they were pronounced "clean". St James Hospital opened as the Borough Asylum in 1879. It was used for the treatment of infectious diseases, as a military hospital in World War I, and an emergency treatment centre in World War II. Its main building is grade II listed. Both these historic hospitals have now been closed and redeveloped.

Queen Alexandra Hospital was built in 1904–8 in Cosham. It was originally a military hospital, replacing an earlier one in Lion Street. As Cosham was still rural, the new hospital was connected to Portsmouth by trams. In 1926 it was handed over to the Ministry of Pensions and charged with caring for disabled ex-servicemen. Civilian patients were first treated during World War II. All but 100 beds were transferred in 1951 to the newly formed NHS. The hospital expanded rapidly, then in the 1960s it was decided to make it a district general hospital. Further buildings followed, until the Royal Portsmouth patients could be transferred. Following further expansion funded as a Private Finance Initiative, the new hospital was officially opened by the Princess Royal in 2009.

After World War II around 700 pre-fabricated houses provided temporary accommodation to those who houses had been destroyed or damaged. Permanent houses were then built on the mainland at Paulsgrove and Leigh Park during the 1950s, 60s and early 70s. Additional council housing was also provided on Portsea Island in Landport, Somerstown and Buckland during this period.

The Tricorn Centre was a shopping complex built in the 1960s but demolished in 2004. It was an infamous example of brutalist modern architecture. The Cascades Shopping Centre is a mall in central Portsmouth, which opened in 1989. The centre has over 60 shops, a mix of chain and

independent stores. The Bridge Shopping Centre, near Fratton Station, was also built in 1989, and includes an Asda store. It has now been bought by the Council, who plan to redevelop it.

The city was affected by the changing nature of employment: shipbuilding provide 46% of jobs in 1951 but only 14% by 1966. Industrial estates were built at Fratton, Paulsgrove and Farlington to create new work. These developments attracted Zurich Insurance's UK headquarters from 1968 to 2007 and IBM's European Headquarters since 1979. Portsmouth Airport closed in 1973 and was redeveloped for a mix of retail, industry and housing. Port Solent was developed for housing and housing during the 1980s on reclaimed land and was opened in 1988 by Princess Anne. In 1997 the Royal Yacht Britannia sailed to Hong Kong for the hand-over to China, then returned to be de-commissioned in front of the Queen and Prince Philip. INEOS Britannia is a sailing team created by Ben Ainslie to challenge for the America's Cup. They had a base in Portsmouth from 2015 to 2021.

The International Ferry Port opened in 1976 at the end of the M275, which opened in the same year. Ferries served the Channel Islands, Cherbourg and Saint-Malo. These destinations are still served, and ferries now also call at Caen and Le Havre in France, as well as Bilbao and Santander in Spain. Nearly 100 cruise ships are expected in 2024, mostly operated by Saga and Virgin Voyages, as well as smaller numbers from Aida, Ambassador, Noble Caledonia, and Viking.

Gunwharf Quays was built on a former naval site which closed in 1995, and opened in 2001, followed by Spinnaker Tower in 2005. The Round the World Clipper race has started from and ended in Gunwharf Quays in 2023 and 2025.The Historic Dockyard has been developed for tourism, with Gosport's Submarine Museum opening in 1981, HMS Warrior in 1987, Gosport's Explosion Museum in 2001, and the Mary Rose since 2013.

Portsmouth Football Club was founded in 1898, and started playing at new newly constructed Fratton Park in 1899. They joined the English Football League in 1920. In 1939 they won the FA Cup, third time lucky after twice finishing as runner-up. Portsmouth then won the First Division in the 1948 and 1949 seasons. Following that they have been relegated and promoted multiple times. They were in the Premier League from 2003 to 2010. In 2008 they won the FA Cup for the second time. They were then relegated three times, and entered financial administration twice. The club was taken over by the Pompey Supporters Trust from 2013 to 2017. Their financial situation has improved, and they currently play in EFL League One. The all seater Fratton Park ground currently hosts just under 21,000 spectators.

Further Reading

Portsmouth Direct Line	Isle of Wight Ferries	Gosport Ferries
Southsea Railway	Portsmouth Trams	Sarah Robinson
Sir Francis Austen	Lloyds of Portsmouth	Vollers Corsets
University of Portsmouth	Portsmouth Grammar School	Portsmouth Guildhall
History of Southsea	Royal Portsmouth Hospital	Queen Alexandra Hospital
Portsmouth F.C.	Port Solent	Tricorn Centre

Timeline of Portsmouth's History and Expansion

286 Romans have established their Portus Adurni naval station at Portchester Castle
501 There is a Saxon settlement in Portsmouth; 838 Confrontation with Danish marauders at Portsmouth
896 Sea battle between King Alfred's and Danish ships; 1001 Portsmouth is pillaged by Vikings
1086 Domesday Book records the existence of manors at Buckland, Copnor, and Fratton on Portsea Island
1180 Jean de Gisors has purchased Buckland Manor; he establishes a settlement at Old Portsmouth
1188 the newly constructed St Thomas of Canterbury chapel is dedicated
1194 Richard I grants Portsmouth a royal charter
1212 Domus Dei hospital and almshouse is founded
1338 Portsmouth is attacked and burned by a French fleet; only Domus Dei and St Thomas church survive
1346 Edward III assembles an army of 15,000 at Portchester Castle to fight in France and the Battle of Crecy
1415 The "Southampton Plot" conspirators are arrested by Henry V at Portchester Castle
1418 The first Round Tower is built in wood
1445 Margaret of Anjou lands in Portsmouth before her marriage to Henry VI
1449 The Bishop of Chichester is murdered in Portsmouth by sailors in a dispute about their wages
1450 Following this murder Portsmouth is excommunicated until 1508
1490s The Round Town is rebuilt in stone, and the Square Tower added
1493 First record of the Hamble-Warsash ferry
1496 Creation of the first dry dock at Portsmouth establishes of the first permanent royal dockyard.
1522 A chain is strung across the entrance to Portsmouth Harbour across to Blockhouse Fort in Gosport
1544 The Henry VIII device fort Southsea Castle is completed
1545 Battle of the Solent is watched by Henry VIII from Southsea Castle; Mary Rose sinks
1560 A residence for the governor of Portsmouth is built at Domus Dei
1587 John White sets sail from Portsmouth to look for the lost colonial settlers of Roanoke, in Virginia
1628 The Duke of Buckingham is murdered outside the Spotted Dog / Greyhound pub
1642 Parliamentarians besiege Portsmouth; the Royalist governor Goring threatens to blow up the armoury
1650 Ship building at Portsmouth recommences with a frigate named Portsmouth
1662 Catherine of Braganza arrives in Portsmouth and marries Charles II in Domus Dei
1664 Impressment (press gang forced recruitment of sailors) begins and continues up until 1815
1665 Charles II orders Bernard de Gomme to reconstruct Portsmouth's fortifications
1688 The fort protecting the Portsbridge crossing is rebuilt
1691 Work commences on Edmund Dummer's expansion of the dockyard, including the novel Great Stone Dock
1698 Tsar Peter the Great of Russian visits Portsmouth and attends a review of the fleet
1711 The HMS Edgar (launched in 1668) explodes while anchored at Spithead; around 500 lives are lost
1711 A turnpike road opens improving the Butser Hill road between Petersfield and Portsmouth
1732 Dr William Smith dies and leaves money for the founding of Portsmouth Grammar School
1733 The Royal Naval Academy is established to train officer cadets
1740 Admiral Anson sets off for South America, returning 4 years later with £90,000 of captured Spanish treasure
1746 Founding of Portsmouth's first synagogue; followed in 1749 by the first Jewish cemetery
1761 A new programme of dockyard expansion commences
1762 HMS Active and Favourite capture Spanish ship Hermione and around £500,000 of treasure
1766 Birth of John Pounds, a shoe maker who helped to found the "Ragged Schools" movement
1776 Criminal law act expands the use of prison ships, which continues until 1857
1771 A new powder magazine is built at Priddy's Hard in Gosport
1775 Lake Taswell's first Portsmouth Guide is published; in 1817 Lake Allen produces his History of Portsmouth
1782 The Royal George sinks off Spithead with the loss of around 900 lives
1787 Grant and Burbey found Portsmouth's first bank at number 46 on the High Street
1787 The First Fleet depart for Australia; the Bounty also sets sail; 1792 court-martial of some of the mutineers
1791 Milne map of Portsmouth shows Old Portsmouth, the Royal Naval Dockyard, and developing suburbs

1792 The suburb at Portsmouth Common is renamed Portsea, after the island
1796 Samuel Bentham, Inspector General of Naval Works, initiates further rebuilding of the dockyard
1802 The Portsmouth Block Mills were built to manufacture pulley blocks using Marc Brunel's process
1805 HMS Victory returns to Portsmouth with Nelson's body after his victory at the Battle of Trafalgar
1814 Sovereigns of the alliance against Napoleon meet at the Governor's House
1825 Regular steam ship ferry service runs between Portsmouth and Ryde on the Isle of Wight
1828 Clarence Yard is established in Gosport for victualling Royal Navy ships, including Wyatt's brewery
1840 Steam powered chain ferry route opens between Gosport and Portsmouth; horse drawn trams commence
1841 London and South Western Railway (LSWR) open a route to Portsmouth via Eastleigh and Gosport
1843 More land is reclaimed to create a seven-acre basin (opened 1848) and works for constructing steam ships
1845 After a quarrel at Hollingsworth's Rooms in Southsea, the last English duel was fought in Gosport
1859 LSWR open their direct train route to Portsmouth via Woking, Guildford, and Havant
1859 Royal Commission on the Defence of the UK leads to the creation of Palmerston forts
1860 The Warrior is an early navy warship with iron hull armour; in 1987 she joins the National Historic Fleet
1861 Clarence Pier opens; followed in 1879 by South Parade Pier
1869/70 Portsmouth and Gosport School of Science and Art is founded; becomes Portsmouth University in 1992
1871 Vosper & Company was founded; in 1936 this is listed publicly; in 1966 they merge with J I Thornycroft
1876 Railway reaches Portsmouth Harbour station
1882 The Roman Catholic Cathedral of St John the Evangelist is dedicated
1890 Portsmouth Guildhall, originally the Town Hall, is constructed; it has to be re-built after World War II
1898 Portsmouth Football Club is founded; their Fratton Park ground is completed in 1899
1900 New Royal Theatre, Portsmouth, is completed; 1907 King's Theatre, Southsea, is completed
1900 Portsmouth Dockyard has employed 8,000 people; this increases to 23,000 during World War I
1904 The whole of Portsea Island is incorporated into Portsmouth
1904–8 Queen Alexandra hospital is built; following further expansion it is opened by the Princess Royal in 2009
1906 HMS Dreadnought is built and launched at Portsmouth; 8 more were built before World War I
1912 Review of the fleet at Spithead includes 223 warships
1919 First bus services in Portsmouth
1920 Cosham, Wymering, and Paulsgrove on the mainland become part of Portsmouth
1926 Portsmouth is awarded city status
1927 St Thomas of Canterbury parish church begins operating as the new anglican cathedral
1932 Drayton and Farlington on the mainland become part of Portsmouth
1933 Airspeed move to the newly constructed Portsmouth Airport
1939 Population of Portsmouth is around 250,000
1940-44 Around 930 die in bombing and 20% of Portsmouth's houses are badly damaged or destroyed
1942 Operation Overlord underground headquarters are constructed 30 metres below Fort Southwick
1944 D-Day forces leave Portsmouth and the south coast for the Normandy landings
1968 Sir Alex Rose lands in Southsea after sailing single-handed around the world in the yacht Lively Lady
1976 International Ferry Port opens at the end of the M275, which was also completed this year
1982 Sixty nine naval vessels and eighteen merchant ships sail from Portsmouth to the Falkland Islands
1982 The wreck of the Mary Rose is raised from the sea bed
1988 Hovercraft Museum, Lee-on-the-Solent, opens
2001 Gunwharf Quays opens, followed by the Spinnaker Tower in 2005
2011 First Victorious Festival is held; A3 Hindhead tunnel opens

Note that many dates are approximate: early records are limited, and building projects often span several years

Part IV
Southampton

Introduction to Southampton

You are invited to explore the city of Southampton. There are many interesting and historic sights you can see as you walk around. There is also a wealth of information you can access via the internet. This guide has a collection of articles which describe walks you can follow, summarise the historical background and context, and list some further sources you might read.

Most places in Britain have an interesting story to tell. Some special aspects of Southampton are:

- most complete old town walls in the south of England
- more surviving medieval vaults than anywhere else in Britain
- a departure port of the Mayflower (1620) and Titanic (1912)
- Jane Austen lived in Southampton between 1806 and 1809
- first railway line connecting any south coast port to London (1840)
- designated military embarkation point number one during World War I
- home to the S6.B seaplane which won the Schneider trophy in 1931
- the first civic centre in England opened here in 1932
- home to the Spitfire, an important World War II fighter plane
- around 3.5 million troops left from Southampton to join the campaign to liberate Europe
- busiest cruise port in the UK, and the second busiest freight port

The old town is one of the easiest and most popular parts of Southampton to visit. The original railway station building also still exists, as does the grand railway hotel next door. Southampton's aviation history is on display in its Solent Sky museum, and the Sea City museum tells the story of the Titanic. There are also Titanic era buildings and monuments you can see as you walk in the old town and the original dock area, now Ocean Village. You cannot normally enter the modern docks yourself but there are viewing points along the water's edge where you can easily see the ships, boats and ferries on their way to or from the port. You can also see cars and containers waiting to be transferred. During high season, an average of two cruise ships leave per day.

Contents

Central Southampton Sights
Walk Around the Old Town Walls
Historic Old Streets Walk
Walk Around the Central Parks
Green and Blue Walks
Pre- and Early History
Norman & Medieval Southampton
Southampton's Spa Period
Shipbuilding & Sailing in Southampton
Southampton Docks and Railway
Military Southampton
Bridges of Southampton
Southampton Timelines
Walking Southampton with Adults and Children
Titanic and Steam Age Walking Trail
Maritime Quarter Walking Trail
Combined City Centre Walk
Green Walk with pub and café stops
Southampton in the 1500s and 1600s
Local Industry from 1700
The High Street in the 1800s
Mail, Passenger and Cruise Lines
Solent and Southampton Aviation
Civic Southampton
Maps of Southampton

Additional Background Information

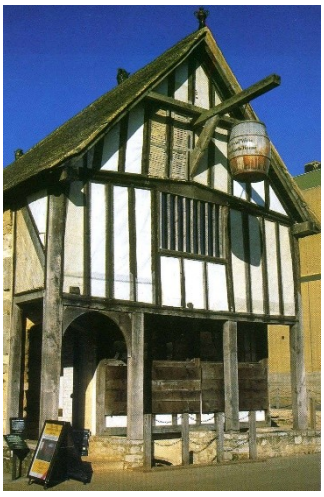
Southampton has been involved in some other significant historic events, including:

- Saxons accepted Cnut of Denmark as the King of England here
- Henry I learned that his son and heir, William, had perished at sea in the White Ship
- After his ransom Richard I is said to have spent Christmas in Southampton Castle
- The so-called Southampton Plotters were tried and executed here
- Shakespeare wrote about this event and the battle of Agincourt in his play Henry V
- Philip of Spain landed here before marrying Queen Mary I

In Norman and medieval times, Southampton prospered thanks to trade with Europe. There was an easy connection from here to Normandy, and the royal family and their barons still has territories and relatives in Normandy and the rest of France. Although disputed and fought over, Gascony and Bordeaux were English territories from the marriage of Henry II to Eleanor of Acquitaine up to the end of the 100 years war. Southampton was a major importer of wine from Bordeaux and, later, Spain and Portugal. Wool from major monastic estates was the main export in medieval times. The best quality was used for tapestry production in Flanders and, later, Florence.

St Michael's church dates back to 1070 and is the oldest building in Southampton still in use. The shells of two impressive norman houses remain to be seen and explored. The late 13th century medieval merchants house is "the only building of its type to survive substantially as first built" according to Wikipedia. The Tudor House museum is based in a late 15th century town house.

The close connection with Europe facilitated the migration of protestants such as the Huguenots escaping religious oppression. Many settled in Southampton and brought their skills and business acumen. Non-conformists such as Quakers were active here, with a burial ground established in the late 1600s. The famous congregationalist hymn writer, Isaac Watts, was born here in 1674.



Southampton is a walkable city. There are over 100 sights of historic and architectural significance city centre alone. Of the 37 listed buildings in the city, 15 are grade I and 20 grade II*. Thirteen of the grade I listed properties are inside or border the Old Town, and 10 of the grade II* ones.

As well as the on-street heritage, Southampton has impressive archives. Taxes raised on the town's port and trade were an important source of revenue for the crown. At one stage, the port was the third most important in England. It was because of this that the town was raided and sacked in 1338 at the start of the 100 years war. Following this disaster the town walls were built up on the sea-ward side, and a new gun tower built at Gods House in the early 1400s.

Keeping track of trade and taxes required keeping good records, and Southampton has extensive archives dating back to 1199. The 1454 Terrier, for example, lists all properties in the town at that time and their owners. Various royal charters were granted to the town from 1189 to 1640. In 1447 Henry VI created the "town and county of Southampton", separate from Hampshire, and responsible for collecting port fees between Lymington and Langstone, and the Isle of Wight.

From the 1500s, Southampton's European trade declined, however, and the 1600s were not prosperous. A recovery began in the 1700s when landed gentry and aristocracy started building country houses on estates near Southampton. A mineral spring was discovered near the Bargate in 1740, starting the Spa Period, which lasted for around 100 years. In the 1830s investors set up companies to build Southampton's docks and railway, taking advantage of steam power. Newly created shipping companies secured contracts to deliver mail and passengers around the world.

The population increased from around 10,000 in 1800 to around 100,000 in 1900. White Star moved their express transatlantic service from Liverpool to Southampton in 1907, then Cunard in 1919. The docks have been extended multiple times to accommodate more and larger ships. This expansion continues, with the opening of Southampton Container Port in 1977, and a new 500 metre berth (SCT 5) being added in 2014.

Passenger services to the Isle of Wight have operated since the 1820s and the Red Funnel ferry company was founded in 1861. In the early 1900s they offered a network of pleasure trips around the Solent and along the south coast as far as Eastbourne and Torquay.

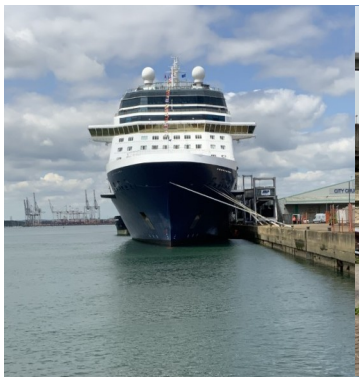
The walks around the city centre given here feature over 100 sights of interest, including 20 associated with the Titanic. There were 724 crew members from Southampton, and 542 of them died when she sank on her maiden voyage in April 1912. During World War II, 631 Southampton residents were killed by bombing raids, some evidence of which still remains as you walk round.

The green and blue walks outlined here take you through some of the city's many green spaces and along the water's edge. There plenty to see in Southampton outside the city centre, including the sights below, which can easily be reached on foot or by public transport.

Chapel Mills, Marine Parade
Conduit House, Commercial Road
Cross House, Crosshouse Road
Director Generals House, Inner Avenue
Guildhall and Guildhall Square, Above Bar
Ordnance Survey (original site), Inner Avenue
Outdoor Sports Centre, Hill Lane
Peartree House, Peartree Avenue
Quaker Cemetery, The Avenue
Redbridge Old Bridge, A35

Hansard Art Gallery, Above Bar
Hartley Library, University Road
Holyrood Estate and Public Art, Bernard Street
Jesus Chapel, Peartree Green
Mansbridge Old Bridge, A27
Mayflower Theatre, Commercial Road
Mayflower Studio Theatre, Above Bar
Mountbatten Statue, Grosvenor Square
Old Farmhouse, Mount Pleasant Road
Old Cemetery, Hill Lane
Spa (site of), Spa Road off Portland Terrace
St Marys Football Stadium, Britannia Road
Solent University, East Park Terrace
South Stoneham Church, St Marys Church Close
South Stoneham House, Wessex Lane
Southampton Common, The Avenue
Townhill Park House, Cutbush Lane
Turner Sims Concert Hall, Salisbury Road
Weston Shore, Weston Parade
Woodmill and Riverside Park, Woodmill Lane

In addition, there are clusters of listed buildings in Bedford Place, Bernard Street, Brunswick Street, Bugle Street, Carlton Crescent, Cranbury Place, Cumberland Place, Henstead Road, the High Street, Old Redbridge, Portland Street, Portland Terrace, Queens Terrace, and Rockstone Place.



A number of aviation companies were set up in Southampton. The most successful, Supermarine, built high speed seaplanes which won the Schneider Trophy three times in succession in the 1930s. These experimental designs later led to the Spitfire, a fighter plane crucial to the successful air defence during the Battle of Britain. In 1940, however, the Supermarine factories were bombed and destroyed during the Blitz. Manufacture continued in shadow factories set up elsewhere.

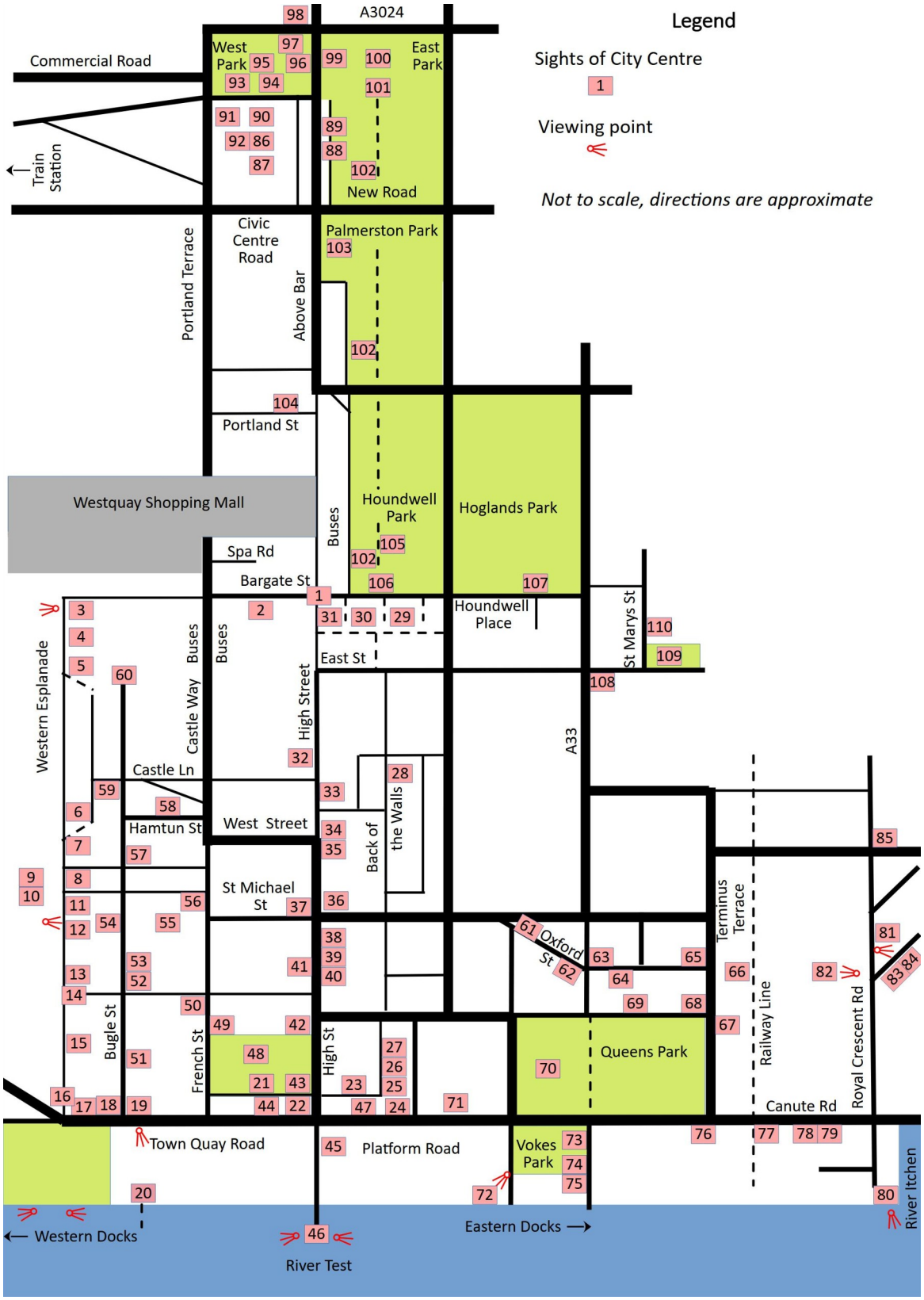
Other manufacturers also created factories in Southampton to take advantage of its port expansion and global connections, including Thornycroft, Ford, British American Tobacco and Pirelli. Sadly their factories have all closed, so the economy of Southampton is currently based on services. There are two Universities, created in 1952 and 2005, both from pre-existing institutions.

Southampton was awarded city status in 1964 and since 1997 has been administered as a unitary authority, separate from the county of Hampshire. In 1976 the football club won the FA cup for the first and (so far) only time. The current population is around a quarter of a million. Many of its suburbs have been incorporated into the city. Further growth is constrained by the M271 motorway to the west, opened in 1975, and the M27 to the north, opened in 1983. Southampton remains well connected globally by its port and Universities, with over 150 languages spoken.

Map and List of Sights of Central Southampton

This map shows most of the main sights in Southampton city centre. There are over 100 of them in an area of around a square mile. It could easily take a whole day to walk round and see all these sights, most of which have an informational display board or plaque to read. You can also follow the links in the list below to reach a web page with further information. The sights are listed in four groups: old town walls, historic old town streets, maritime quarter, and the civic centre and central parks. You can plan separate routes around each of these areas to break up your walking.

Map



Old Town Walls

1. Bargate: this medieval gateway was the main entrance to the old town from the north
2. John Le Flemyng: the Flemyngs were wealthy merchants, and John was MP, then mayor in 1319
3. Arundel Tower: corner tower dating from around 1250 enabling archers to defend the town
4. Catchcold Tower: tower from the early 1300s providing gun defences on two levels
5. Forty Steps: staircase added in 1853 providing access to the sea shore below the walls
6. Castle Vault: dating from 1190s this vault under the castle stored royal goods awaiting transit
7. Castle Watergate: medieval gateway connecting the castle to the royal quay below
8. Arcades: external arches constructed in the mid 1300s to protect the town from attack by sea
9. Long Rooms (site of): built in 1761 to provide a venue for rich visitors to dance, dine or bathe
10. American or D-Day Wall: brick wall where US soldiers etched their names in World War II
11. Blue Anchor Gate and Lane: medieval route now named after the later Blue Anchor Inn
12. Norman House: two storey merchants house built 1150-75, now part of Tudor House Museum
13. Anspach Place: Margravine of Anspach, Lady Betty Craven, stayed near here in the early 1800s
14. West Gate: heavily defended gateway to the West Quay dating from around 1400
15. Westgate Hall: originally a fish market and cloth hall in St Michaels Square, relocated in 1630s
16. Mary Ann Rogers Memorial: heroic stewardess who drowned on the Stella ship in 1899
17. Mayflower Memorial: commemorates the departure of the Mayflower and Speedwell in 1620
18. Royal Yacht Club: grand club house, opened in 1846 with Prince Albert in attendance
19. Wool House: built around 1400 to store wool prior to export, with other later uses, now a pub
20. Royal Pier Entrance: gatehouse to the pier opened in 1833 by Princess Victoria and her mother
21. Canutes Palace: remains of a norman merchants house and warehouse, dating from late 1100s
22. Town Watergate: remains of a tower, part of the gateway connecting the town and town quay
23. St Juliens Chapel: originally built around 1190, later used for worship by protestant refugees
24. Gods House Tower: major gun tower built in the 1400s next to a gate from around 1300
25. Round Tower: defensive tower from the 1300s, was previously a dovecote
26. Reredorter: a communal lavatory connected to town ditches, part of the Franciscan friary
27. Friary Gate: a medieval gate giving the friars access to their lands outside the walls
28. Old Bond Store: two storey red brick warehouse built in the mid to late 1800s
29. Polymond Tower: corner tower dating to 1300s or earlier, originally 28 feet tall
30. York Gate: built in 1769 to provide access to new buildings outside the walls

Historic Old Streets

31. High Street Iron Plates: Southampton history plaques in the pavement south from the Bargate
32. Midland Bank: grade II listed bank building from 1900, now a restaurant
33. Star Hotel: grade II* listed inn, in the 1700s provided coach services, as advertised on its wall
34. Bank of England: this provincial branch opened in 1940 and continued until 1987
35. Dolphin Hotel: a Tudor inn rebuilt in the 1750s as a coaching inn which hosted Jane Austen
36. Holyrood Church: bombed in 1940 and kept as a ruin incorporating many historic memorials
37. National Provincial Bank: grade II* listed bank building from 1867, currently empty
38. Red Lion: grade II* medieval building first licensed as a pub in 1552
39. Oakley and Watling: grade II site of fruit importers who supplied the Titanic, now a restaurant
40. Old Post Office: grade II listed post office building dating from 1892
41. Market & Holyrood Chambers: grade II listed fish market and shops dating from around 1870

42. Mayors Wine Vaults: remains of cellars used by medieval mayors & merchants to store wine
43. Quilters Vault: barrel vault around 800 years old known at one time as Dame Isabella's vault
44. Geddes Warehouse & Seaway House: grade II listed warehouse and offices from the 1860s
45. Harbour House: grade II listed offices built in 1925 for the Harbour Board, founded in 1803
46. Town Quay: a quay since medieval times still used by local ferries, with good view of the docks
47. Platform Tavern: a pub since 1860s, frequented by dock workers, with a Titanic black plaque
48. Town Quay Park Plaques: commemorating rescue of Basque children and Japanese prisoners
49. Weigh House: stone building and vault around 800 years old used to weigh, grade and tax wool
50. Merchants House: grade I listed wine merchants house from 1300s with stone storage vault
51. Register House (former West Hall): the site of a medieval house, then a grammar school
52. Duke of Wellington: a public house since 1490, built on 800 year old foundations and cellar
53. No. 38 Bugle Street Black Plaque: house where a former Titanic crew member once lived
54. Tudor House and Garden: built around 1500, this house has been a museum since 1912
55. St Michaels Church: the old town church, dating from the time of the Norman conquest
56. St Michaels Vault: medieval vault, later was part of a prison, and used as an air raid shelter
57. Undercroft: grade II* listed vault, probably a basement shop, built around 800 years ago
58. Hamtun Street Murals: two murals, both illustrating events from Southampton’s history
59. Jane Austen house (site of): Jane lived in Southampton from 1806-9, and rented a house here
60. Castle Bailey Wall: significant remains of the Norman castle, which existed here until 1618

Maritime Quarter

61. No. 5 Oxford Street Black Plaque: house where a former Titanic crew member once lived
62. Sailors Home: this hostel was home to 17 Titanic crew, now run by the Salvation Army
63. Alliance Hotel: some Titanic passengers stayed at this temperance hotel, now the White Star
64. The Grapes: this pub was popular with Titanic crew, including the famous Slade brothers
65. London Hotel: this pub was home to a former Titanic crew member
66. Terminus Station: the first train service from a south coast port to London opened in 1840
67. South Western Hotel: some Titanic passengers stayed at this 1865 railway hotel, now flats
68. Royal Mail House: previously offices of the Royal Mail Steam Packet shipping company
69. No. 26 Queens Terrace Black Plaque: house where a former Titanic crew member once lived
70. Gordon Monument: 1865 tribute to General Gordon following his death at Khartoum
71. Old Bowling Green: this bowling green has been in use since 1299, the world's oldest
72. Ocean Terminal (view of): cruise terminal opened in 2009 replacing an earlier art deco building
73. Titanic Memorial plaque: memorial to the Titanic in the grass in front of Admiralty House
74. Admiralty House: sorting office for mail shipped on ocean liners such as the RMS Titanic
75. Old Contemptibles Plaque: commemorates the troops who sailed from here in World War I
76. Union-Castle House: offices of the Union-Castle shipping company until 1953
77. Rail Track into the Docks: the last remaining railway crossing into the Victorian eastern docks
78. LSWR Office: London and South Western Railway controlled the docks from 1892 to 1922
79. Canute Chambers: location of White Star offices where relatives waited for news of the Titanic
80. Ocean Village marina: first of the Victorian eastern docks, opened as the Outer Dock in 1842
81. Solent Sky Aviation Museum: over 20 local & nationally significant aircraft, including a Spitfire
82. Railway Goods Shed: grade II listed Victorian goods shed at the back of Terminus Station
83. Atlantic Hotel: some third class Titanic passengers stayed at this hotel, now flats

84. Royal Albert Hotel: grade II listed hotel dating from 1853, now flats
85. Central Bridge: grade II listed railway bridge dating from 1882, originally crossed many tracks

Central Parks and Civic Centre

86. Clock Tower: the 1933 tower is 48 metre high with bells that play an Isaac Watts hymn tune
87. Civic Centre Foyer Plaques: the foyer memorials include one to the Titanic postal workers
88. Hansard Art Gallery: contemporary visual art gallery opened in 2018 in its present location
89. Mayflower Studio Theatres: used for touring theatre, youth & community shows, rehearsals
90. City Art Gallery: a nationally important art gallery opened in 1939 within the Civic Centre
91. Millvina Dean Garden: green space commemorating the youngest and oldest Titanic survivor
92. SeaCity Museum: has sections covering the Titanic and other Southampton stories
93. Enclosure: art installation from 2000, a large hollow stone cube celebrating the park's skyline
94. Passage: Portland stone artwork from 1996 by John Maine
95. Statue of Isaac Watts: dating from 1861 to commemorate the Southampton born hymn writer
96. Cenotaph: grade II* Lutyens designed war memorial listing those killed in World Wars I and II
97. Water Pump: part of the water system supplying central Southampton from the Common
98. Titanic Musicians Memorial: commemorates the musicians who played on while the ship sank
99. Titanic Engineers Memorial: grade II memorial to the ship's engineering officers, who all died
100. Queens Peace Fountain: colourful water feature dating from 2001, known for peach vigils
101. Richard Andrews Statue: dating from 1860, commemorates five times mayor of Southampton
102. Fred Perkins Lime Tree Avenue: dating from 1863, given by five times mayor of Southampton
103. Lord Palmerston Statue: dating from 1868, commemorates famous prime minister
104. Millais Blue Plaque: commemorates famous Pre-Raphaelite artist born here in 1829
105. Melly Water Fountain: dating from 1859, designed to deter beer drinking
106. Gas Column: dating from 1822, commemorates iron columns for gas street lighting
107. Air Raid Memorial: commemorates 634 residents killed in World War II bombing
108. Central Hall: built by methodists in the 1920s to support sailors, dock workers, and families
109. St Marys Church: on the site of a saxon church, the current building dates from the 1950s
110. City College: a workhouse dating from 1866, has been a technical college since 1965

Other Sights

There are plenty of other sights just a short walk off the city centre map:

Admiral Jellicoe Blue Plaque: commander of the fleet at the World War I Battle of Jutland
Carnival UK Headquarters: offices of Carnival, who own the Cunard and P&O cruise lines
Chapel Steam Mill: baked supplies for the Royal Navy from its construction in 1781
Cross House: medieval shelter for passengers using the historic Itchen Ferry crossing
Director General's House: grade II listed house for the Ordnance Survey chief from 1840
Mayflower Theatre: largest theatre on the south coast, run as a charitable trust, built in 1928
Mountbatten Statue: Earl Mountbatten, Admiral of the Fleet, lived at Broadlands in Romsey
Ordnance Survey Offices: the Ordnance Survey was located here from 1841 to 1969
Quaker Cemetery: burial ground for Southampton Quakers, dating from 1662, still in use
St Mary's Football Stadium: opened in 2001 in the old saxon district, seats over 32,000
Royal South Hants Hospital Chapel: grade II listed part of the hospital located here since 1844
Water House: grade II structure, part of the medieval system supplying water to the old town

Walking In Southampton for Adults and Children

Southampton centre is very walkable. It is only one mile from the northern edge of the central parks to the waterfront. Although the inner ring road and A33 are busy, the streets in between are relatively quiet. There are many traffic-free alleys and back lanes to enjoy. Within the one square mile central area there are over 100 historic sites and architecturally significant buildings to see. Plaques and notice boards provide you with information about these.

Museums and art galleries in the city include the following, with Google ratings and visit times:

- SeaCity Museum (covers the Titanic and Southampton Stories), 4.4*, 2+ hours
- Solent Sky (covers the Schneider Trophy, Supermarine Spitfire, Flying Boats), 4.8*, 2+ hours
  the Police and Fire and Industrial Heritage Museums are co-located with Solent Sky
- Tudor House Museum and Garden (also includes a norman house), 4.5*, 1+ hour
- Gods House Tower (built as a gun platform, and later used as a jail), 4.7*, 1+ hour
- Medieval Merchants House (a well-preserved house from the late 1200s), 4.2*, 15 minutes
- John Hansard Art Gallery (exhibitions of modern art), 4.2*, recommended stay varies
- Southampton City Art Gallery (entry is free), 4.5*, 1+ hour

If you wish to visit one or more of these, be sure to check their opening times and plan accordingly. There are cafés within the SeaCity Museum, Gods House Tower, and the Tudor House. If you just want a coffee you can access these for free without visiting the museum (and paying for entry). There are also cafés, pubs and restaurants particularly in Above Bar Street, the High Street, Ocean Village, and Oxford Street, so it is easy to take a break and refresh yourself as you walk around.

There are several self-guided walking routes around Southampton available on-line for you to follow. Alternatively you can join a guided walking tour such as the ones organised by See Southampton. Their guides have considerable local expertise. Selected tours include access to one or more of the old town's medieval vaults, which are normally kept locked up. On the other hand, you have to pay to join a guided tour, and must stick with its prescribed route and pace.

This guide includes maps and directions for six self-guided walks around the city centre. The time needed to follow these will depend on your walking speed, how long you stop to enjoy the sights and views, and whether you visit one or more of the museums or other attractions you pass. Be warned that the walking maps are not to scale and show selected streets on a simplified grid.

Even if you only have an hour, you can still *Walk the Old Town Walls*, a top-rated route. You can start and end at the Bargate, or anywhere else along the medieval walls which enclosed the historic old town. The full circuit is around 2 kilometres, and passes historic sights from medieval times and later. In the middle ages Southampton was England's third most important port, exporting wool and importing wine. Taxes on these paid for the impressive fortifications.

The *Historic Old Streets Trail* takes you along the main streets and alleys inside the Old Town. You pass 30 sights of historic or architectural interest, with signs and plaques providing information and

insight. Southampton prospered in Georgian and Victorian times. During the spa period Jane Austen lived here for 3 years. In the Victorian steam age, new institutions, businesses, and banks were established. The route, which starts and ends at the Bargate, can be walked in an hour.

The *Maritime Quarter Trail* explores the area around the Victorian era Eastern Docks. You pass 30 sights of significant historic interest, many associated with the Titanic. You also pass the Industrial Heritage and Solent Sky Aviation Museums, and the Ocean Village marina. The route, which starts and ends at the top of Oxford Street, is around 3.5 kilometres and can be walked in an hour.

The *Civic Centre and Central Parks Trail* explores the city centre north of the Old Town. You start and end at the 1930s Civic Centre, passing SeaCity Museum and Southampton City Art Gallery. You also walk through the Central Parks, which have a range of plants, flowers and foliage to enjoy, depending on the season. The route is around 3 kilometres and can be walked in under an hour.

If you have two hours, you can follow the 5 kilometre *Steam Age and Titanic Trail*. Southampton's Steam Age ran from 1838 when construction began on the Eastern Docks. The coal-powered Titanic left the port and sank in 1912. You pass 30 sights associated with historic ocean liners and the railway, gaining insight into Southampton role as Britain's main hub for ocean going passenger traffic. In 1938 the port connected 560,000 passengers with 160 other ports around the world.

Alternatively you can follow the *Central Southampton Walking Trail*. This includes 50 sights from the other walks above, helping you to understand and appreciate the city's history and heritage.

Depending on the time available to you, some recommended routes or combinations are:

1 *hour*: Walk the Old Town Walls
2 *hours*: Walk the Old Town Walls and Historic Old Streets, *or*
2 *hours:* Walk the Steam Age and Titanic Trail, *or*
2 *hours*: Walk the Central Southampton Trail
3 *hours*: Walk the Old Town Walls and the Steam Age and Titanic Trail
4 *hours*: Walk the Central Southampton Trail, and visit Sea City Museum along the way
4 *hours*: Old Town Walls, Historic Old Streets, Maritime Quarter, Civic Centre and Central Parks
Full day: As above, and also visit two or three of the city's museums and art galleries

This web site also includes four waterfront walks and one longer walk around some of the city's significant green spaces including Southampton Common, the Outdoor Sports Centre and Golf Course, and Lords Wood. These walks take you to some of the city's suburbs. These are easy to access using public transport or by car. If your visit to Southampton is longer than a day, you should certainly consider following one or more of these routes. Details of these walks are:

- *Green Southampton Walk*, 6 mile circuit, up to 3 hours
- *Four Green and Blue Walks*
  1. Walk along the Itchen via Riverside Park, 5 kilometre circuit, up to 2 hours
  2. Weston Shore and Victoria Country Park, 5 kilometres one way, around 2 hours
  3. Itchen River Boardwalk, 3 kilometres one way, around 1 hour

4. Ocean Village to Itchen Ferry via the Toll Bridge, 1.5 kilometres one way, around 30 mins

Visiting Southampton With Children

There is enough archaeological, architectural and historical interest to entertain most adults following self-guided or guided walks such as the ones mentioned above. But how can you persuade children that they are enjoying themselves and want to continue? Here are some suggestions to help you. Each of them involves finding specific locations or buildings on the map, planning a route between, and spotting them along the way. Some research on the web will reveal additional information to add interest to your journey.

List of Buildings to Tick Off

A simple approach is to provide children with a list of buildings they can tick off while walking and driving round the city. This could be a list of buildings from each century:

Century	*Building*	*Century*	*Building*
1000s	St Michael's Church	1600s	Westgate Hall (this building was moved from St Michaels Square & rebuilt on its present site c.1634)
1100s	The Bargate		
1200s	The Wool House	1700s	Dolphin Hotel
1300s	Old Town Walls	1800s	South Western House
1400s	God's House Tower	1900s	Civic Centre
1500s	Tudor House Museum and Garden	2000s	Westquay Shopping Centre

To pass all these buildings in one journey you could plan a route through the old town, and then a short walk along Portland Terrace, perhaps, from Westquay to the Civic Centre.

Public Sporting and Play Venues in Southampton

There are a number of public sporting and play venues in Southampton. The list below provides a selection, and a web link. Each venue is accessible on foot or public transport from the city centre. Some can be combined in a single trip, if you plan your route carefully.

- Alpine Snowsports Centre: an artificial ski slope
- Houndwell Park: large children's play ground
- Hoglands Park: skateboard park and multi-use games areas
- Municipal Golf Course
- Outdoor Sports Centre: has a BMX track, facilities for athletics and team sports
- Quays Swimming and Diving Complex: also has a gym and exercise studios
- St Marys Football Stadium: provides tours on non-match days
- The Common: large children's play ground
- Water Activities Centre: where you can learn to sail
- Woodmill Outdoor Activity Centre: you can kayak, or try the High Ropes Course

Four Women of Southampton

An activity with a more grown up theme would be to investigate four women who lived in Southampton and consider why they had such different lives, and indeed different life expectancies. Lady Elizabeth Berkeley lived for some 77 years, whereas Jane Austen died at 41, and Ellen Wren at 46 or so. Lucia Foster Welch lived for around 76 years. The table below gives brief details of each of these famous and notorious women, together with a list of sources providing details of their lives and, where available, their portrait.

Lady Elizabeth Berkeley (1750 – 1828), aka Lady Betty Craven, Margravine of Brandenburg-Anspach. Aristocrat, extensive social life, married twice, writer, travelled in Europe and beyond, spent time in Southampton between 1801 to 1812, Anspach Place off West Quay was named after her.	Wikipedia article Sotonopedia article Daily Echo article
Jane Austen (1775 – 1817), visited Southampton as a child, lived here from 1806 to 1809, mainly staying in a house in Castle Square rented from the Marquis of Lansdowne, before moving to Chawton and publishing her famous books. Lady Elizabeth, who once rescued Marquis Lansdowne from the sea, may have inspired one of Jane's characters, the Echo argues.	Sotonopedia article Daily Echo article Daily Echo article Account of rescue
Ellen Wren (1847? - 1894), was born in Millbrook, then still countryside, and died in Simnel Street in the old town. Was a servant, drunkard, petty thief and presumed prostitute. Her tragic death energised the city to clear away slums and brothels in the old town, replacing them with improved housing. William Cooper painted many of the old buildings in watercolour.	Team Tudor article 1 Team Tudor article 2 Team Tudor article 3 Daily Echo article William Cooper
Lucia Foster Welch (1864 – 1940), moved to Southampton in 1903 and married a second time. Supported Votes for Women. Became a councillor, then Southampton's first female mayor. In this role she welcomed both Amy Earhart and Henry Ford when they visited. Also opened Cobden Bridge.	Wikipedia article Sotonopedia article Local history article Paper on suffragettes

Lucia Foster Welch's former house at 61 Oxford Street still exists, together with other similar houses from that time nearby. The Pig in the Wall hotel was at one point owned by the Margravine and still features the old street sign for Anspach Place. The buildings Ellen Wren lived and died in were demolished after her death. You can still visit Simnel Street, of course. At the junction with Bugle Street are two Municipal Cottages built over the Undercroft around 1900; these are good examples of the public housing which replaced the earlier slums. Finally, this junction is close to Cement Terrace where Jane Austen and her family stayed, then called Castle Square, as indicated by a plaque on the side wall of the mock Tudor building. In Castle Lane you can find a house which belonged then to her landlord, the Marquis of Lansdowne, opposite the Old Court Buildings. Your children can plan a route to take you past these historic places and gain further insight into these four women as you walk around the city's varied and fascinating centre.

Southampton Centre

You might ask them they think the city centre is. Southampton has a Central Baptist Church, Central Bridge, Central Hall, Central Police Station, Central Station, Civic Centre, and Combined Court Centre. These buildings are over a mile apart from east to west, and from south to north.

Has the city centre moved over time, and if so why? Were these buildings simply put up wherever there happened to be space available for them at the time? Were there previously equivalent buildings in more central locations? If so, when and why they did move?

Links to Other Walking Routes

Short Jane Austen trail, and a longer one
Business School Recommended Walks
Common Walk
Go Jauntly app
GPSmyCity app
See Southampton
Test Valley Boardwalk
Clock Tower tours

Walk Southampton's Old Town Walls

The Saxons and then the Normans developed a port town known as Hamwic, Hamtun and finally Southampton. From the 1100s to the 1500s Southampton prospered as a major centre for trade, with regular visits by ships from France, Spain, and Italy. Some overseas merchants stayed longer, and a few married locally and settled. The main export was wool and the main import was wine. Over time, impressive fortifications were built to defend the port and its wealthy inhabitants. Many medieval gates, walls, towers, vaults, and houses still remain in Southampton's Old Town.

This document describes the popular Old Town Walls Walk. You start and end at the Bargate, following the line of the medieval walls, passing many sights from this period. There are two optional extensions. These divert from the walls into the old town to take you past additional medieval sights. The walk and its extensions are illustrated on the map on the next page. Each of the main sights you pass is numbered in sequence. These include Gods House Tower, the Medieval Merchants House and the Tudor House and Garden, which includes the remains of a norman house. These attractions publish their opening times on their web sites. During the day Arundel Tower the so-called Canute's Palace, and the Weigh House on French Street are open and free to visit. The Wool House, Red Lion, and Duke of Wellington are all now pubs where you can stop for a drink. Many of the sights around the old town have notice boards explaining their history and significance. You can also follow the web links in this document for further information.

The town's vaults are kept locked up. You may be able to peer into a vault through one of the windows. Alternatively, the guides from See Southampton have keys. If you sign up to one of their guided walks, these will often take you inside one or two of these underground cellars.

List of Sights (with Web Links to Further Information)

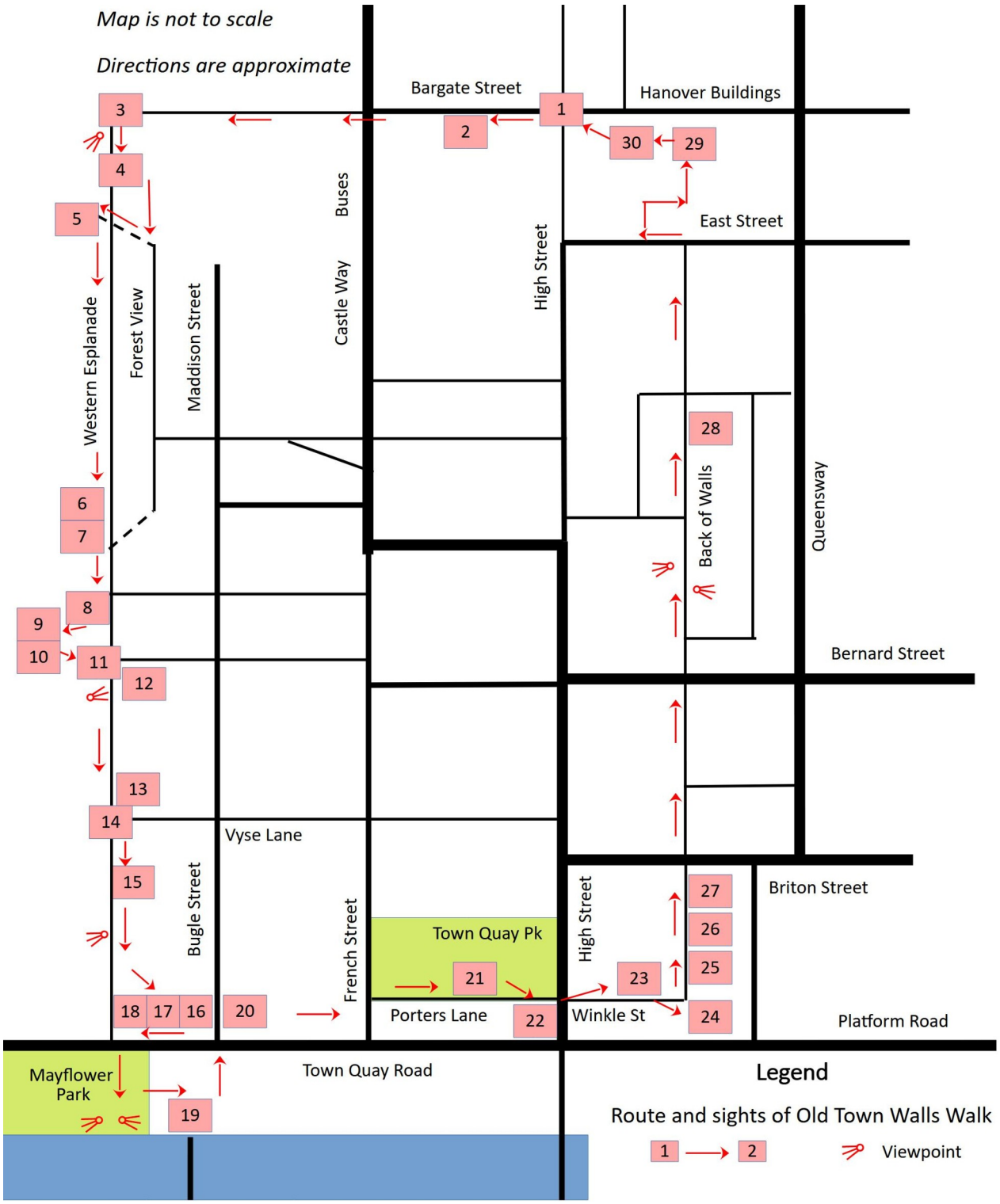
1. Bargate	2. John Le Flemyng	3. Arundel Tower
4. Catchcold Tower	5. Forty Steps	6. Castle Vault
7. Castle Watergate	8. Arcade (north)	9. Long Rooms
10. American or D-Day Wall	11. Blue Anchor Gate and Lane	12. Norman House
13. Anspach Place	14. West Gate	15. Westgate Hall
16. Royal Yacht Club	17. Mayflower Memorial	18. Mary Ann Rogers
19. Royal Pier	20. Wool House	21. Canutes Palace
22. Watergate	23. St Juliens Chapel	24. Gods House Tower
25. Round Tower	26. Reredorter	27. Friary Gate
28. Old Bond Store	29. Polymond Tower	30. York Gate

See Southampton

Directions for the Old Town Walls Walk

From the Bargate (1) head west and climb the metal stairs to the walkway which runs along the old town walls and goes over the busy main road (Castle Way). You pass a statue of John Le Flemyng (2) before climbing Arundel Tower (3). Enjoy the view! After you have climbed back down, walk south along the wall passing Catchcold Tower (4). On the other side of the bus hub are the arches used to support the Castle Bailey Wall (5). Return to the town wall near the Masonic Lodge and take the Forty Steps, a Victorian addition, down to Western Esplanade. In the middle ages, the West Bay came right up to the walls. In Victorian times this was a popular place to promenade.

Sketch Map of the Old Town Walls Walk



Head south along the esplanade following the walls, which tower above you. You pass the entrance to the Castle Vault (6) where royal wine was stored, and the remains of the Castle Watergate (7) which originally gave access to the medieval royal quay. The West Bay was reclaimed in the 1930s to create the Western Docks and land for industry, now mainly hotels and retail.

Continue south down Western Esplanade with the town wall on your left. You pass the arches of the Arcades (8). In 1338, at the start of the 100 years war, the town was raided, sacked and plundered. At the time there were no defences along the waterfront south of the castle. In the

late 1300s, a new wall was built along the quays, joining up existing merchant houses; outlines of their windows and doors are still visible. On the opposite side of the street the stone wall has a plaque recording that this was the site of the Long Rooms (9) during Southampton's spa period. A second plaque on the brick wall to the left marks the American or D-Day Wall (10). Over 100 World War II soldiers who left from here to join the campaign to liberate Europe carved their names in this wall. Back on the east side of the Esplanade, Blue Anchor Gate (11) cuts through the town wall to a lane dating back to the 1300s. Right of the gate a slit window shows you the remains of a Norman House (12), previously called King John's Palace, but in fact dating from the late 1100s. Later this housed a pub called the Blue Anchor, hence the modern name of the lane

Continuing south along Western Esplanade with the town wall to your left. You reach a a pub hotel in a white castellated building. At the top is a sign "Anspach Place" (13). Author and traveller Lady Elizabeth (Betty) Craven married the Margrave of Anspach and acquired a number of properties in Southampton, where she lived intermittently in the early 1800s. Next door is the West Gate (14). This gave access to the original West Quay. Pass through this gate, noting the grooves of the former portcullises above your head, then turn right to the half-timbered Westgate Hall (15). This was originally located in the centre of the Old Town, but moved here in the 1630s. The lower half was an open fish market, while the room above stored cloth

South of the hall, modern spiral stairs take you up to the top of the wall, with views of ships in the western docks, distant container port, or across the water to Marchwood port. Descend to ground level and follow the path south and east until you reach a white italianate building facing the busy A33. This was originally a Royal Yacht Club (16), opened in 1846 in the presence of Prince Albert. At that time it was still possible to sail in tidal waters off here. Later, a second Royal Yacht club was established. Both still exist, but the Royal Southern is now based in Hamble, and the Royal Southampton in Bucklers Hard. Double back and head west along the A33. Among the trees is a pillar commemorating the Mayflower (17), which provisioned in Southampton before setting sail, together with the leaky Speedwell, in 1620. The ships had to make repairs in Plymouth, often stated as the Pilgrim Fathers' starting port rather than Southampton.

Continue west to reach the Mary Ann Rogers memorial (18). She was a stewardess on the passenger ship Stella which sank off the Channel Islands. Mary Ann refused a seat in a lifeboat and instead gave her lifejacket to a young girl. She was one of the 105 who were lost in this 1899 tragedy. Take the pedestrian crossing across the A33 to reach Mayflower Park. Cross the grass to the waterfront where you have fine views of the docks to the west, opened in 1934 after major land reclamation, including the park itself. You may see a ship moored at one of the two nearby cruise terminals. To the east you can see the remains of the Royal Pier (19) opened in 1833 by Princess Victoria and her mother, closed in 1979, and destroyed by fire in 1987. The ornate gatehouse survives and is currently a restaurant.

Exit the park, go east across the entrance to the Red Funnel marshalling yard, then take a second pedestrian crossing back over A33 to reach the medieval Wool House (20). This originally stored sacks of wool ready to be shipped abroad, but is now a popular pub. On the corner with Bugle

Street is a white italianate building on opposite side Head east from here and cross over French Street to reach Porters Lane. Half way along this narrow back street are the remains of the so-called Canutes Palace (21). This was built as a hall house in the late 1100s, with vaults below, suggesting it was used as a norman merchant's home and warehouse.

At the end of Porters Lane you reach the High Street. On your right are the remains of the town Watergate (22). This gate gave access to the quay south of the Old Town, now known as Town Quay, and was protected by a round tower. Cross the High Street into Winkle Street and continue east. On your left is St Julien's church (23) and the associated alms houses. These were originally part of Gods House Hospital, founded in 1185 and given to Queen's College Oxford in 1343. On the corner you reach the back of Gods House Tower (24), a gun platform added in the 1400s to improve the town's defences during the 100 Years War.

Follow Winkle Street around the corner and head north. In the town wall to your right you pass the Half Round Tower (25), Friary Gate (26) and Reredorter (27). You also pass some interesting tiled artwork on Friary House to your left, commemorating the Friary built here from 1280 onwards. Franciscan monks tended the poor and sick. In the 1300s they built a system for piping water to their Friary, which was used for the whole town. At the end of Winkle Street is Briton Street; cross this and head north along the Back of the Walls back street. This follows the line of the medieval walls, which have however disappeared in this part of town. Cross Bernard Street and keep heading north. Note the fine public art on the boundary of Austen House. You reach the Old Bond Store (28), which is next to a short section of medieval wall. When you reach East Street then right into the Strand. Head north to reach the remains of Polymond Tower (29). Turn left and follow the old town walls along York Walk to reach York Gate (30). Just ahead is the Bargate, where you started this walk. *Note that at present there is major building work in this area. You need to walk clockwise around the building site and approach Polymond Tower from the north.*

Medieval Vaults

Medieval vaults in the Old Town include:

- Castle Vault, on Western Esplanade south of the Westquay shopping mall
- Gloucester Square Car Park, north side of entrance
- Lankaster Vault, High Street, underneath the open area outside the Oasis wine bar
- Medieval Wine Vaults on the west side of the High Street, north of Quilter's vault
- St Michaels Prison Vault, north of the church, used as a World War II air raid shelter
- The Undercroft, on the corner of Bugle Street and Simnel Street
- Weigh House Vault, underneath the Weigh House on French Street

Some vaults are opened up for the heritage days in September, or can be hired from the council.

- Council Vault Hire

Titanic and Steam Age Walking Tour

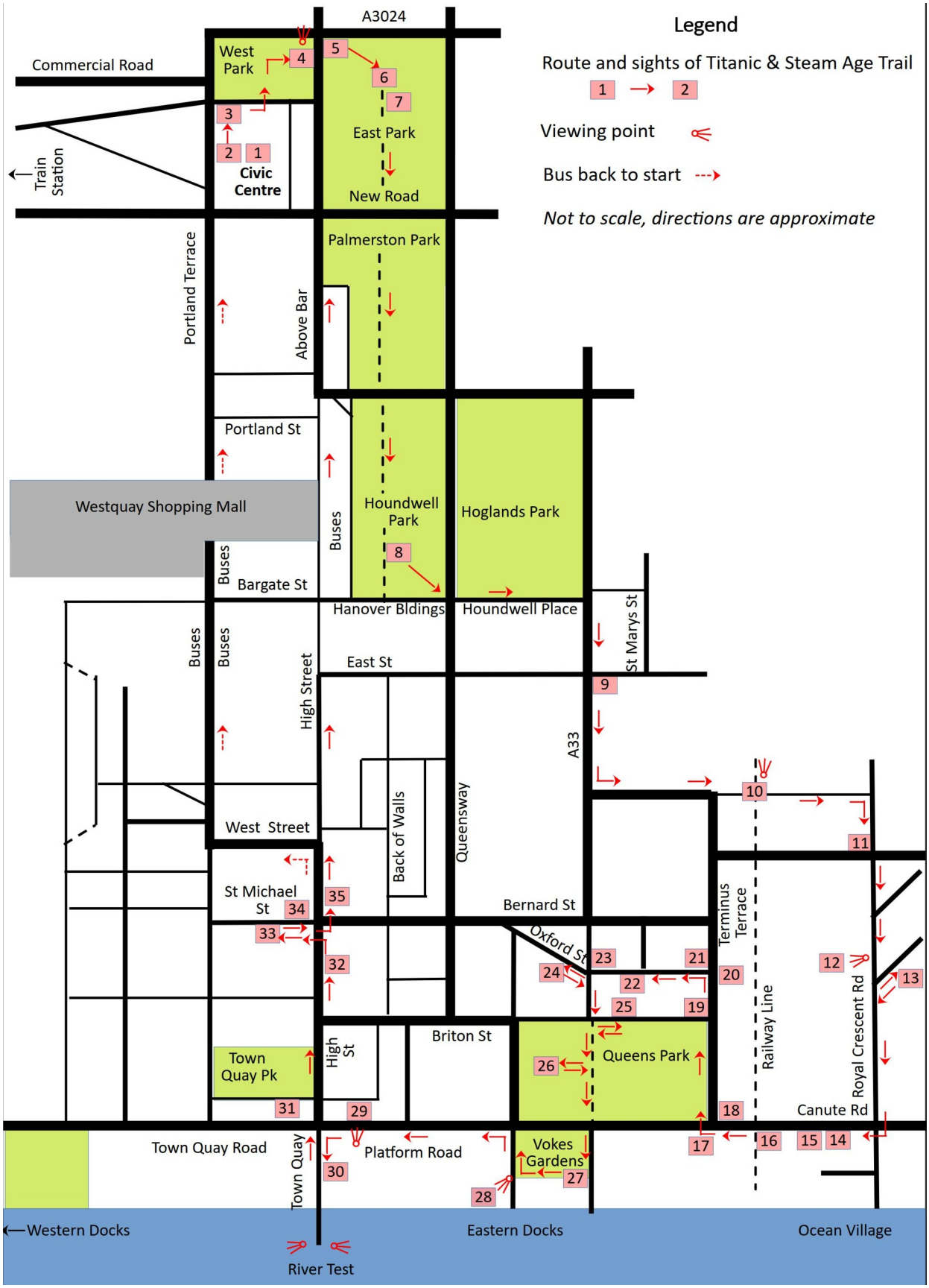
The Titanic is the ship most strongly associated with Southampton. She sailed on her maiden voyage from here in 10th April 1912 and sank on 15th April killing 1500 to 1600 people. Some of the passengers and many of the crew came from Southampton, so this tragedy had a major impact locally. The steam age lasted here from around 1838, when the foundation stone for the Victorian docks was laid, until the 1930s, by which time most ships were no longer coal-powered. Iron hulled propeller driven ships first operated translatlantic crossings in the 1840s. As efficiency improved steamships opened routes to Asia and Australia. The Suez canal opened in 1869. P&O (Peninsular and Oriental) operated many mail, freight and passengers ships to the far east from Southampton. In 1907 White Star switched their New York service from Liverpool to Southampton, and in 1919 Cunard followed. In 1936, the Southampton docks handled 46 percent of the UK's ocean-going passenger traffic. The golden age of ocean liners lasted up to the 1960s, say, when passengers chose instead to travel abroad by jet. Since the 1970s cruising holidays have increased in popularity, however, and Southampton is still the UK's leading cruise port.

This walk starts and ends at the Civic Centre, which houses Seacity Museum, the Central Library, and Southampton Art Gallery. It passes through the central parks, originally common land, and re-developed in the 1850s as public space. You reach the railway district which grew up after the line to London opened in 1840. Many of the Titanic's crew came from this part of Southampton, and many passengers stayed in hotels near the eastern docks. At the start or end of this walk you can spend time in the Seacity Museum with its Titanic model and map, recordings of crew and passengers who survived, and a dramatisation of the inquiry into the causes of this disaster. Some company office buildings have survived, including those of the White Star Line. The walk heads west from the docks with views of the modern Ocean Terminal, near the Titanic's berth, number 44. Continuing west you reach the High Street where a number of significant and historically interesting buildings affirm the prosperity of Southampton during the age of steam. You pass buildings of local ship provisioners before reaching Holyrood Church, which has two further Titanic memorials. You can complete the circuit by walking back to the Civic Centre, or by bus.

Sights Shown on the Sketch Map, with web links to further information

1 Civic Centre Plaque	2 Seacity Museum	3 Millvina Dean Garden
4 Cenotaph	5 Titanic Engineers Memorial	6 Statue of Richard Andrews
7 Fred Perkins Avenue	8 Drinking Water Fountain	9 Central Hall
10 Chantry Footbridge	11 Central Bridge	12 Railway Goods Shed
13 Atlantic Hotel	14 Canute Chambers	15 LSWR Office
16 Rail Track into the Docks	17 Union-Castle House	18 South Western Hotel
19 Royal Mail House	20 Terminus Station	21 London Hotel
22 The Grapes	23 Alliance Hotel	24 Sailors Home
25 Queens Terrace Black Plaque	26 General Gordon Monument	27 Admiralty House
28 Ocean Terminal (view of)	29 Platform Tavern (view of)	30 Harbour Board Office
31 Geddes Warehouse	32 Oakley & Watling Building	33 Cooksey, Son & Burch
34 National Provincial Building	35 Holyrood Church	Titanic Map

Sketch Map



Directions

Start at the Civic Centre. Take the central entrance and climb to the top of the grand staircase. To the right of the door to the council chamber is a memorial to the **Titanic Postal Workers** (1), made

from a spare propeller. If time permits, look around the foyer where there are other interesting monuments. Go back outside and turn right, walking clockwise around the Civic Centre to reach **Seacity Museum** (2). The first floor tells Southampton's Titanic Story using original artefacts, recordings, re-enactments, models, and maps. After the museum, continue north to reach the **Millvina Dean Garden** (3). Millvina was the youngest passenger on the Titanic, just 9 weeks old, and its oldest survivor when she passed away aged 97. Her mother, who also survived, brought her back to Southampton. Millvina stayed in Southampton until she retired to the New Forest. Cross Commercial Road to enter the West Park. Turn right and head east to reach the **Cenotaph** (4) with its lists of local soldiers who lost their lives during the first and second world wars.

Go to the top of Above Bar Street (also called the QE2 mile). Over the busy ring road you can see the small Titanic Musicians memorial on the building opposite. Take care if you decide to cross the ring road to read this, then return to Above Bar Street. Cross over into the East Park to reach the memorial to the **Titanic Engineering Officers** (5). Walk south and east, to reach the **statue of Richard Andrews** (6), a coach builder who was mayor of Southampton five times. Now go south and enter the **Fred Perkins lime tree avenue** (7) donated by another five times mayor in memory of his mother. Follow the avenue south, crossing New Road and Poundtree Road. After passing a popular children's playground you reach the former **Drinking Water Fountain** (8) donated in 1859 by temperance campaigner, Charles Melly. Take the diagonal path on the left to reach the roundabout, cross carefully, and continue east along Houndwell Place.

When you reach the busy A33 take the pedestrian crossing, then turn right to head south, crossing St Marys Street to reach the **Methodist Central Hall** (9) built in the 1920s. At that time, before the founding of the NHS, the Methodist mission provided a food depot, mother & baby care, nursing and clinic. These services were important for the sailors, dock workers, and their families who lived near here. Follow the busy A33 south, turning left again to head east, passing the remains of the Chantry Wall bordering for the former rectory. Continue straight along a smaller street to reach the **Chantry Footbridge** (10). This crosses over the single railway track left from the original main line to London. Continue east then turn south along Royal Crescent Road and go underneath the 1882 **Central Bridge** (11). On the right side of Royal Crescent Road you can see the grade II listed **Railway Goods Shed** (12) whose size confirms the importance of railway transportation during the steam age. Just up Albert Road to the south of the aviation museum you can see the former **Atlantic Hotel** (13) where some of the third class Titanic passengers stayed. This was originally called Emigration House, and is now the Atlantic Mansions apartments.

Continue south along Royal Crescent Road and cross the busy Canute Road. Turn right and head west along the south side of this wide road. You reach **Canute Chambers** (14). A plaque on this building confirms that this was the location of the White Star Offices. After the Titanic sank in 1912 worried families gathered here to receive news of their relatives who were working or travelling on board. The building next door was built in 1899 as **offices for the London and South Western Railway** (15, LSWR). The London and Southampton railway company changed its name to LSWR in 1839 and managed the docks from 1892 to 1923. You have to look up to see the date and their initials on this building. Continue west to reach the level crossing which takes the last remaining **rail track into the docks** (16). In 1912 three railway tracks crossed Canute Road into the docks. Some Titanic passengers arrived directly on boat trains from London Waterloo.

Continue west to reach the former **offices of the Union-Castle Line** (17) who operated mail

services to South Africa from 1857 to 1977. Carefully cross the busy A33 at the lights, to reach Queens Park. On the opposite side of Terminus Terrace you can see the substantial **South Western Hotel** (18), now converted to flats. Head north with the former **Royal Mail Steam Ship Company offices** (19) to your left; the company was based here from 1907. Opposite is the original **Southampton Terminus Railway Station** (20), completed in 1840, now a casino. You can see part of the station concourse roof behind. First class passengers travelled by train to here and entered the South Western Hotel, all undercover. Turn left into Oxford Street. On your right is the **London Hotel** (21). Continuing up Oxford Street, on your left is the **Grapes pub** (22) with its Slade brothers plaque, and on your right the **Alliance Hotel** (23), now called the White Star. A little further up the street is the **Sailors Home** (24), now a Salvation Army hostel. These were all used by Titanic passengers or crew before boarding. Return from the Sailors Home along Oxford Street and turn right down Latimer Street to reach Queens Park. Queens Terrace house number 26 is a few doors to the left. The **Black Plaque** (25) on this house marks the residence of a lost Titanic crew member. The Titanic map, on-line and in Seacity Museum, shows all of these addresses.

Cross the park and note the 1885 **memorial to General Gordon** (26) on the right. P&O steamships transported troops to regions such as the Crimea and China where Gordon fought. Cross the busy A33 again to dock gate 4 where authorised crew and passengers can enter the docks. On the right is **Admiralty House** (27), built in 1902 as the post sorting office for the docks. On the house is a plaque commemorating the World War I soldiers who travelled from here to France. On the grass in front is a plaque by the Titanic Society, which gives 43 as the Titanic berth number, rather than 44. Turn right and walk along the green grass of the Vokes Memorial Gardens with its concrete walls suggesting the railway tracks which used to run along here. Stand on these walls to get a good view of the modern **Ocean Cruise Terminal** (28). This serves cruise ships docked berth 46, with berths 43 and 44 just to the left. Continue west along the busy A33, here called Platform Road. Opposite you see Gods House Tower and **Platform Tavern** (29). Titanic crew members drank in this pub, and one first class steward gave it as his address before being lost at sea aged 27. Turn left and go south down Town Quay to the 1925 **Harbour Board building** (30). From the end of Town Quay you can view the docks and any ships moored at a berth nearby.

Return along Town Quay and cross the busy A33. Note the grade II listed **Seaway House and Geddes Warehouse** (31) to the left, dating from the 1860s. Head north up the High Street. Further north on the right you see the ornate narrow white **Oakley and Watling building** (32) built in 1908 with initials O&W at the top. This firm supplied groceries to the Titanic. Clearly, selling provisions to the steamships was profitable business. On your left numbers 123 and 124 were originally a fish market, now a restaurant. Along St Michaels street is the **Cooksey, Son and Burch building** (33). They supplied groceries and wine in the 1800s. On the corner with the High Street is the grade II* listed **National Providential Bank building** (34), dating from 1867.

Continue north and cross the busy junction with Bernard Street to reach **Holyrood Church** (35). This was kept in its ruined state as a reminder of the damage caused to Southampton by bombing in World War II. Inside the ruins you will find a memorial plaque to the Titanic crew, and also a Titanic memorial fountain. On the pavement outside is an anchor from the QE2. From here you can walk up the High Street and Above Bar Street to reach the Civic Centre where you started this walk. Alternatively you can take a bus from the stop opposite the church.

Walk The Historic Streets and Alleys of Southampton's Old Town

This short walk takes you along some of Southampton's historic streets: Bugle Street, French Street, and the High Street, previously known as English Street. You also cut through some historic alleyways such as Vyse Lane, Simnel Street, and Castle Lane. You pass a number of historic sights from the 11th to the 20th century. Signs and plaques provide information about these attractions.

Sights Shown on the Sketch Map (with web links to further information)

1. High Street Iron Plates	2. Midland Bank	3. Star Hotel
4. Bank of England	5. Dolphin Hotel	6. Holyrood Church
7. National Provincial	8. Red Lion	9. Oakley and Watling
10. Old Post Office	11. Hartley Institution	12. Mayors Wine Vaults
13. Quilters Vault	14. Geddes Warehouse	15. Harbour House
16. Town Quay	17. Platform Tavern	18. Old Bowling Green
19. Town Quay Park Plaques	20. Weigh House	21. Merchants House
22. Duke of Wellington	23. Tudor House and Garden	24. St Michaels Church
25. St Michaels Vault	26. Undercroft	27. Hamtun Street Murals
28. Lansdowne House	29. Jane Austen house (site of)	30. Castle Bailey Wall

See Southampton Vault Hire

Directions

From the Bargate (1) head south along the High Street. Ten yards south of the main arch you can see two iron plates on the pavement recording local Roman history. Over 30 further plates on the east side of the High Street, laid out in a time line, give further facts and quotations. These are more frequent further along when they cover modern history.

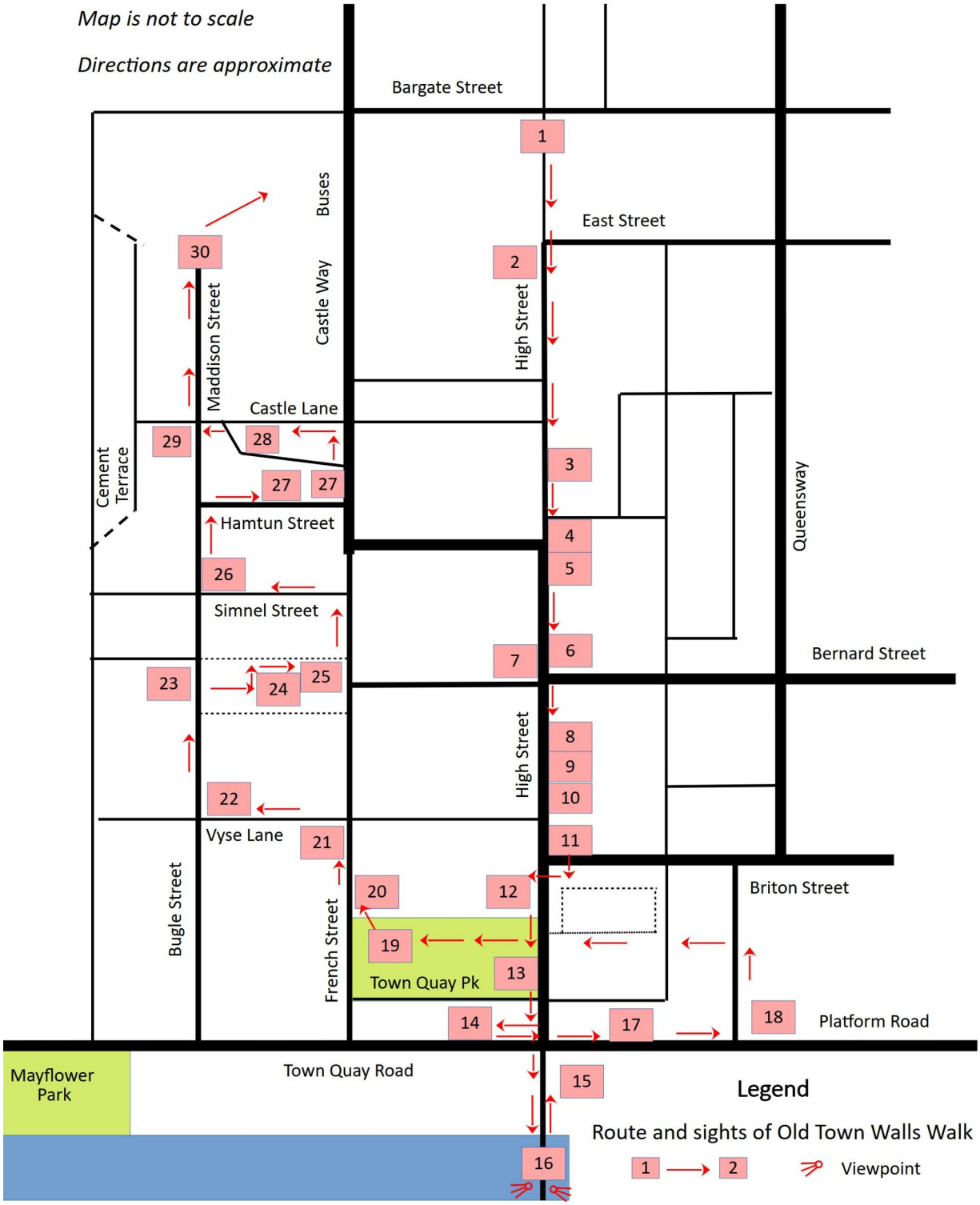
Stay on the east side of the High Street and cross the traffic turning into East Street. Opposite is an imposing building, a former branch of the Midland bank (2) dating from 1900, now a restaurant. You pass a former Lloyds bank building where there are more iron plates in the pavement, which cover local Saxon history. Continue south to reach the Star Hotel (3), a former coaching inn. Note the old plaque on the side of this building advertising the 10 hour travel time to London. Further south is a former branch of the Bank of England (4), now converted to student accommodation.

Just next to this is the Dolphin Hotel (5), also student accomodation. In Southampton's spa period, this hotel also hosted balls, and Jane Austen is said to have celebrated her 18th birthday here. Continue to the ruins of Holyrood Church (6). This was largely destroyed in the 1940 Blitz of Southampton, and has been kept as a memorial, with various plaques around its walls including ones commemorating the Titanic Crew and Merchant Navy. In front is an anchor from the former QE2 (Queen Elizabeth the Second) cruise liner. On the corner with St Michael's Street opposite is a former branch of the National Provincial bank (7), dated 1867.

Take care when crossing the busy junction with Bernard Street. Continue south to reach the grade II* listed Red Lion pub (8), first licensed in 1522. The original building is older, and includes medieval cellars. Next to this is a grade II listed building, currently a restaurant, but originally built

for Oakley and Watling (9), a grocery firm who supplied the Titanic. At the top of the building are their initials, and decorations depicting fruit and vegetables. The Victorian Central Post Office (10) is next door housed in a 1892 building ornate terracotta dressing, now converted to flats.

Sketch Map



Continue south. On the corner with Briton Street, partly obscured by a hedge, is a plaque commemorating the Hartley Institution (11). This establishment was opened here in 1862 by Lord Palmerston, and having changed its mission and location became the University of Southampton in

1952. When the signals permit, cross to Briton Street, where there two iron plates have information about the spa period. Then cross the High Street and head south past an entrance to St John's Primary School, formerly the site of an ancient church. Just to the south you reach one of Southampton's many medieval vaults (12), protected by a corrugated iron roof. This was originally a warehouse used for storing wines and other goods. Continue south to reach Quilters Vault (13). The window and door date from around 1300 and 1500 respectively. You may be able to peer in through the window to see the grade II listed vault, which is available to hire from the Council. Alternatively, entry to vaults is included in many of the guided tours run by See Southampton.

Continue south to the traffic lights at the end of the High Street. Turn right and head east along the busy A33. You pass the yellow brick Seaway House to reach the red brick Geddes Warehouse (14), built in 1866 to hold luggage, now a restaurant and flats. Double back to High Street traffic lights and cross the A33 carefully. Walk the length of Town Quay (15) to enjoy views of the River Test, Southampton Water, and the docks to the east, west and south. You may see a catamaran, car ferry, or other ship passing, or moored at one of the nearby berths. Double back and return along Town Quay. Note the plaques at the end of the office buildings paying tribute to World War II soldiers and workers. Just past these on your right you see former offices of the Harbour Board (15) dating from 1925 and grade II listed. Return to the A33 junction.

Cross over the A33 to reach corner of the High Street and Platform Road (the A33). Turn right and walk. You reach the Platform Tavern (17), which featured in the Titanic movie. This pub also has a black plaque commemorating the crew member who stayed here before boarding this fateful ship. Continue east, passing Gods House Tower café, and cross Lower Canal Walk to reach the Old Bowling Green (18), which has been used for recreation since 1299. Turn left and go north up Lower Canal Walk. With the Wainwright office building to your right turn left and take the permissive path which takes you through parking for the flats above to reach the old Town Wall. Go through this, then continue across Gloucester Square car park, which you pass more stone walls with another vault underneath. Cross the High Street to Town Quay Park (19). Walk through this park to reach a brick wall with a plaque on each side. One commemorates the 4000 Basque children brought to Southampton to escape the Spanish Civil War in 1937 and the other 21,000 British prisoners who were repatriated from Japanese camps in 1945.

Turn right up French Street to the medieval Weigh House (20) where wool was assessed, weighed and valued for tax purposes. Opposite you can see the stained glass window. This chapel was built for King Edward VI Grammar School (located in Bugle Street between 1696 and 1896) and is now available for weddings at the Register Office. Contine north to the Medieval Merchants House (21), a three-part hall-house dating from the 14th century, with an undercroft used to store wine at a constant temperature. To the north is the site of another medieval building, still unexcavated, and also two intact vaults beneath the modern flats.

Turn left and head west down Vyse Lane to reach the Duke of Wellington pub (22) on Bugle Street. This has been a public house since 1490. It was significantly damaged in World War II and subsequently rebuilt, but its cellar and foundations date back to the 1200s. Previously it was

known as the Brewhouse and also the Shipwright's Arms. Turn right and go north up Bugle Street to reach the grade I listed Tudor House and Garden (23). The oldest part of this building dates back to 1491. It has been a museum since 1912. Exhibits include medieval stocks, a 15th century book of hours, an Elizabethan jug, a Georgian sedan chair, and of course the house itself. You can enter the shop and café without paying an entry fee. As well as the Tudor House the garden includes the shell of a Norman House, now incorporated into the Town Wall.

Cross Bugle Street and the square to reach the grade I listed St Michaels Church (24). This church dates back to around 1070, the oldest surviving building in Southampton. It has a font dating back to 1170. The spire was originally built in the 15th century, rebuilt in 1732, and raised to 50 metres in 1887. The east window depicts the five old town churches. St Michaels is the only one remaining after the World War II bombing of Southampton, albeit with some damage. Glass shards from St Michaels were used to create a new window in a Bismarck, North Dakota, church.

Continue clockwise around St Michaels. To the north and east of the church is a brick tiled cylindrical structure. This is the entrance to the St Michael's Air Raid Shelter (25) beneath your feet. This is a medieval vault, also used as a prison, which was re-purposed in World War II. Continue north up Castle Way to Simnel Street. Turn left down and go west to the crossroads with Bugle Street. On the north corner is another medieval vault, the grade II* listed Undercroft (26). On the side, you can see the steps which lead down to this 14th century shop. The two brick houses on top date from 1902, some of the earliest council housing in Southampton, part of the slum clearances which finally happened after the tragic death of Ellen Wren in 1894.

Turn right and go up Bugle Street, then turn right into Hamtun Street. To your left is the Castle House tower block, built in the 1960s on the site of the Norman castle keep. On the wall is a mural (27) depicting key events in the history of Southampton. It was created for Sainsbury's in 1978 and moved here in 2011. Just round the corner into Castle Way is a second, smaller mural from 2013.

Continue up Castle Way to the Castle Lane and turn left. On your left is a Georgian house. You can still see fire insurance marks on its wall, and further along some faded paintwork with the word "Lansdowne". The Marquis of Lansdowne bought the ruined castle in 1804/5, intending to create a grand gothic replacement. Sadly he died in 1809 before this could be completed, so it was sold and demolished. His widow lived in Lansdowne House (28) until around 1818. A few yards to the west of Lansdowne House is, the more modern Cement Terrace. A plaque on the first building, a former pub, records that this is the site of a house where Jane Austen (29) stayed in Southampton. She lived here with her sister, mother, brother Frank, and his wife after leaving Bath and before settling in Chawton. They rented this property backing on to the old town walls from the Marquis.

Between Lansdowne House and Cement Terrace is Maddison Street. Walk up this street to the stone archway and go through the stone Castle Bailey Wall (30). This wall, with its impressive line of supporting arches, runs in a curve around the northern edge of the castle. Cross the bus hub to reach Bargate Street and return to the Bargate where you started this walk.

Self-Guided Walk Around Southampton's Maritime Quarter

Southampton enjoyed a renaissance during the steam age. The railway reached Southampton before any other south coast port. New docks were built near the confluence of the rivers Itchen and Test. Shipping companies set up postal, passenger, and freight services to provide fast and reliable connections between Britain and the rest of the world. The city's population grew from around 27,000 in 1861 to 161,000 in 1921.

The world's most famous shipping disaster happened just five days after the Titanic sailed from Southampton in 1912. During both World Wars, more troops and equipment left from Southampton than any other UK port.

Though the docks were heavily bombed during World War II there are plenty of historic and architecturally interesting buildings to enjoy as you walk around this fascinating area of the city. You will learn about the Titanic, its passengers and crew, and the shipping companies which made Southampton a gateway to the world in the 1800s and 1900s.

This self-guided route is around 2 miles long and takes up to an hour to walk. Allow extra time to read the information notices, for refreshment breaks, and museum visits. The walk passes the Southampton Aviation museum, Solent Sky, where you can see 20 planes with local connections, and learn more about the city's Industrial Heritage.

You can alternatively take a guided tour with a See Southampton heritage guide. You can also visit the Seacity Museum to learn more about the Titanic and other Southampton stories.

Sights Shown on the Sketch Map, with web links to further information

1. Oxford Street Black Plaque	2. Lucia Foster Welch Home	3. Sailors Home
4 Alliance Hotel	5. The Grapes	6. London Hotel
7. Terminus Station & site record	8. South Western Hotel	9. Royal Mail House
10. Queens Terrace Black Plaque	11. Queens Park	12. Gordon Monument
13. Vokes Memorial Gardens	14. Ocean Terminal (view of)	15. Titanic Memorial plaque
16. Admiralty House	17. Old Contemptibles Plaque	18. Union-Castle House
19. Rail Track into the Docks	20. LSWR Office	21. Canute Chambers
22. Ocean Village marina	23. Solent Sky Aviation Museum	24. Railway Goods Shed
25. Atlantic Hotel	26. Royal Albert Hotel	27. Crosshouse
28. Central Bridge	29. Central Hall	30. St Marys Church (view)

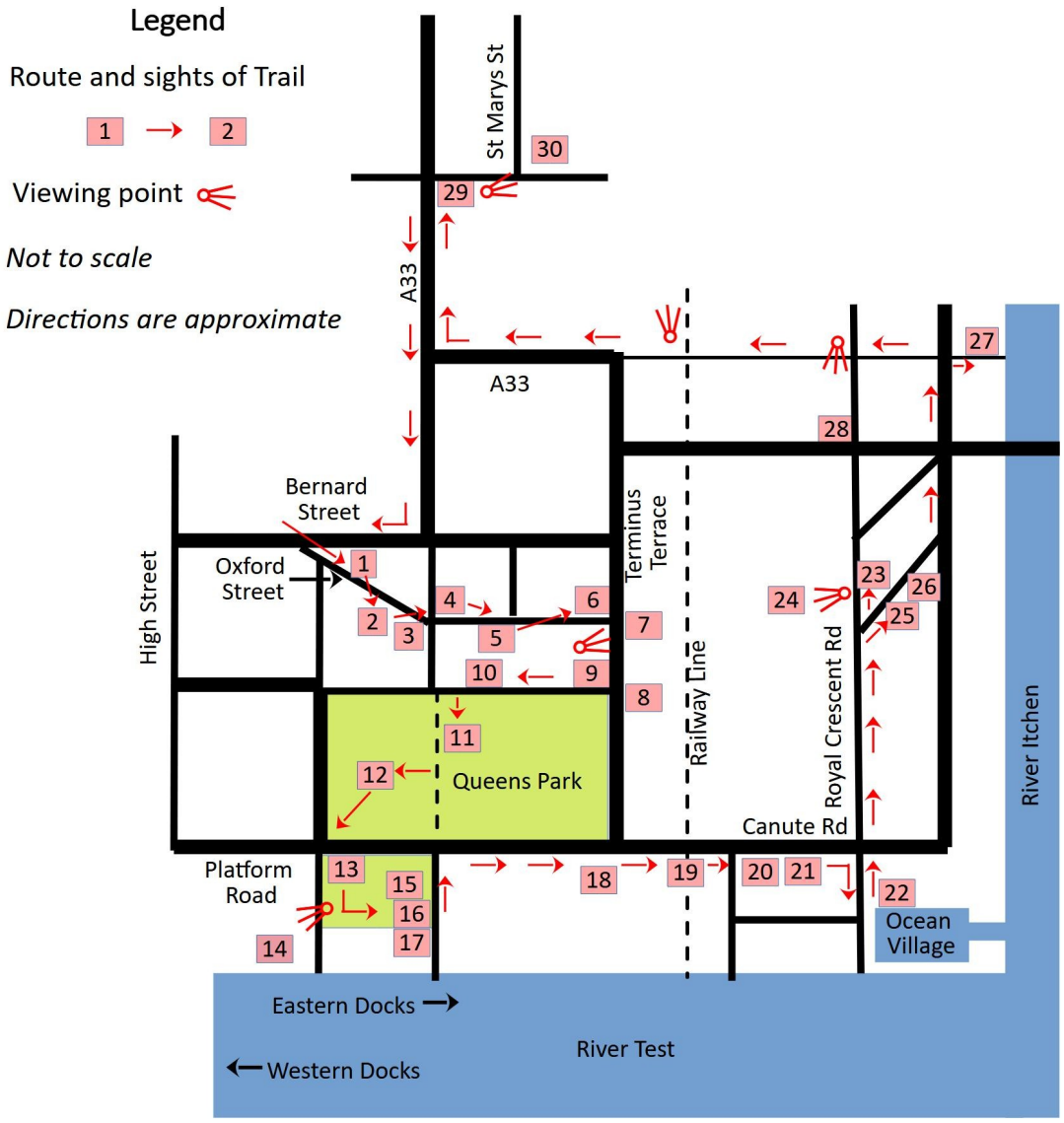
Directions

This walk starts about 300 yards east along Bernard Street from Holyrood Church, or you can take multiple buses to the Oxford Street stop. Note the fine public art decorating Holyrood Housing Estate on the north side of Bernard Street which celebrates Southampton's docks and ships.

Cross to the south side of Bernard Street and enter Oxford Street. This was developed from 1842

when a block of land was leased from its owner, Oxford College. Note the *Titanic Black Plaque* (1) on house number 5 to your left. On the right is house number 51, formerly the home of Southampton's first female mayor, *Lucia Foster Welch.* (2)

Sketch Map



A little further along is the *Sailor's Home*, (3) now a Salvation Army hostel. On the corner opposite is the White Star tavern, formerly the *Alliance Hotel* (4) as indicated by writing above one of its doors. Continue down Oxford Street. On the right is the *Grapes Pub* (5) with its Slade brothers plaque. The last establishment on the left is the *London Hotel* (6). In 1912 these were all used by passengers and crew from the Titanic. Stay on this side of the busy A33. Opposite you can see the former *Terminus Station.* (7) To the right you can also see *South Western House,* (8) formerly a hotel. First class ocean liner passengers arrived by train and could enter the hotel under cover of the station roof.

Turn right down Terminus Terrace with *Royal Mail House* (9) on your right. This was the offices of

the Royal Mail Steam Packet company, at one time the largest in the world. Follow the building round to the right where you reach the grade II listed *Queen's Terrace* (10). Follow this to house number 26, where there is another Titanic Black Plaque. Turn left and into *Queen's Park* (11) at the avenue of large plane trees, then take the path to the right to reach the *General Gordon monument* (12). Go past this taking the left fork to reach the south western exit. Cross carefully over the busy A33 at the traffic lights to reach the *Vokes Memorial Gardens* (13). In Jane Austen's time this was the Platform, a shingle beach with a line of cannons pointing out to sea. Later, trains ran along here to the Royal Pier. Standing on the concrete blocks you can see the modern *Ocean Terminal* (14) building. Beside this is berth 46 where you may see a modern cruise liner moored. The Titanic sailed from a nearby berth in 1912.

Continue east to reach a *Titanic Memorial plaque* (15) fixed to a concrete block in the grass, which was originally inside the docks. This is in front of an imposing brick building called *Admiralty House* (16). Mail was sorted here before being loaded onto the ocean liners. The Admiralty took over responsibility for overseas mail from the Post Office Packet Service in 1823, creating the opportunity for newly formed Steam Packet companies to obtain contracts for operating postal services. On the front of Admiralty House you can see a plaque commemorating the *Old Contemptibles* (17) who passed through these docks at the start of World War I in 1914.

Continue east to reach former offices of the *Union-Castle* (18) shipping company. The Royal Gloucester Baths opened here in 1826 but closed in 1838 when work started on the new docks. The baths were replaced by a customs house, which was then taken over by the Union Castle line.

Head east down Cunard Street. You go over a level crossing where the last remaining *railway line to the docks* (19). You pass a second pair of circular brick columns, marking the former location of another railway line into the docks. Just past this are former offices of the *London and South Western Railway* (20). You can just see the date 1899 on the lower pediment and the initials LSWR on the upper pediment. LSWR took over Southampton docks in 1892 and continued to do so until Southern Railway took over both LSWR and the docks following the Railways Act of 1921.

The next building is a smaller set of offices, *Canute Chambers* (21). In 1912 these were the offices of the White Star line. A plaque records that relatives gathered here for news of their loved ones after the Titanic sank on the 15th April that year. Of the 908 crew, 724 came from Southampton or supplied a Southampton address when they signed on. Of these 542 died, and 178 survived. The city's interactive Titanic map shows these addresses, and can also be seen at the Seacity Museum. The Friends of Southampton Old Cemetery organise walks visiting some graves with Titanic links.

A little further on is the set of traffic lights marking the entrance to *Ocean Village* (22). Turn right and walk past Admiralty Quay and Moresby Tower to reach the marina. The Inner Dock was the first of the eastern docks to be opened, in 1842. After World War II roll-on roll-off continental ferry services began from here in 1966 but had largely ceased by 1984. Instead, the area was redeveloped for housing, offices, and leisure. From here you can see more residential re-development across the River Itchen on the site of the former Thornycroft shipyard.

When you have finished, turn back and cross over the traffic lights into Royal Crescent Road. Ahead on the right is the *Solent Sky Aviation Museum* (23), co-located with the Industrial Heritage Museum. You can see locally designed, built, and operated planes, including a Spitfire, learn about the historic Schneider trophy, and sit in the impressive Beachcomber flying boat. On the opposite side of the road is the grade II listed former *Railway Goods shed* (24).

Take Albert Street (south) north-east, passing the former *Atlantic Hotel* (25), originally built for emigrants. Continue to the former *Royal Albert Hotel* (26) which was also used by ocean liner passengers. At the end of Albert Street turn left along Canute Road and pass under the Itchen toll bridge. Crossing carefully, take the first right into Crosshouse Road, a cul de sac. You soon reach a stone structure with a conical brick till roof. This is the *Cross House* (27) where, from the middle ages, passengers waited to catch the small yacht ferry across the river. Further on you reach two large public slip ways. The traditional ferry was replaced by a floating bridge or chain ferry in 1836, originally steam powered. This was then superceded by the current toll bridge in 1977. Between 1966 and 1980 a hovercraft service also ran from here to Cowes on the Isle of Wight. This was subsequently replaced by a hydrofoil and later a catamaran service running from Town Quay. Now several watersports clubs are based here, so you can learn to row, paddleboard, or sail here.

Turn back and retrace your steps. Cross Canute Road again to the other half of Crosshouse Road opposite. Walking straight on with the toll bridge to your left, sticking to the footpath rather than following the road round to the right. Take the lower route to reach the underpass signed to the City Centre. Follow this to reach the Base Point business park. Keep straight on to reach Chantry Road. On your left, down Royal Crescent Road, you have a view of the *Central Bridge* (28). This area was a major railway marshalling yard, so the bridge needed to cross multiple tracks.

Where the road turns right, keep straight on to reach the brightly painted Chantry footbridge, and cross this over the single remaining railway track, with a view to Southampton FC's ground to the north. Keep walking in the same direction on the other side. Note the City Commerce Centre sign to your left and the Deanery Schools sign to your right. Walk on, with the busy A33 to your left and the old Chantry stone wall to your right. Around the corner you reach the *Central Hall* (29). Keep going round the corner until you have a view of *St Mary's Church* (29), which gave Southampton Football Club the nickname "Saints". Double back, taking the ramp down to the underpass, cross under the A33, turn left and climb the ramp up on your left. Follow the pavement south until you reach Jessie Terrace on Bernard Street, then turn right. You pass St Nicholas church on your right, purchased by the Greek community in 1965. You soon reach the top of Oxford Street where you started this walk.

Further Reading

Titanic Map	The Docks	History of the Port
Floating Bridge	Seaspeed Hovercraft	Hovertravel
Seacity Museum	See Southampton	Southampton Old Cemetery

Central Southampton Walking Trail

This self-guided city centre walking trail visits many of Southampton's main sights. You follow the medieval walls around the old town and continue along to the Victorian eastern docks with their Titanic heritage. You walk the historic High Street, through the central parks, and pass the Titanic museum and art gallery. The six kilometre route is a figure of eight, so you can split it into two shorter walks. There are also two loops you can follow to walk past some additional sights.

Sights Shown on the Sketch Map, with web links to further information

1. Bargate
2. Arundel Tower
3. Catchcold Tower
4. Jane Austen's House (site of)
5. Castle Vault
6. Arcade (north)
7. American Wall
8. West Gate & Westgate Hall
9. Mayflower Monument
10. Wool House
11. Canutes Palace
12. Quilters Vault
13. St Juliens Chapel
14. Gods House Gate & Tower
15. Admiralty House & plaques
16. Union Castle House
17. Canute Chamber
18. Ocean Village
19. Solent Sky Museums
20. LSWR Offices
21. South Western House
22. Terminus Station
23. Grapes Pub
24. Titanic Black Plaque
25. Holyrood Church
26. Dolphin Hotel
27. Star Hotel
28. York Walk
29. Gas Column
30. Lime Tree Avenue
31. Peace Fountain
32. Engineer Officers Monument
33. Cenotaph
34. City Art Gallery
35. SeaCity Museum
36. Civic Centre Foyer
37. Palmerston Statue
38. Millais Blue Plaque

Loop B

B1. Blue Anchor Lane
B2. Tudor House Museum
B3. St Michael's Church
B4. St Michael's Vault
B5. Merchants House
B6. Duke of Wellington

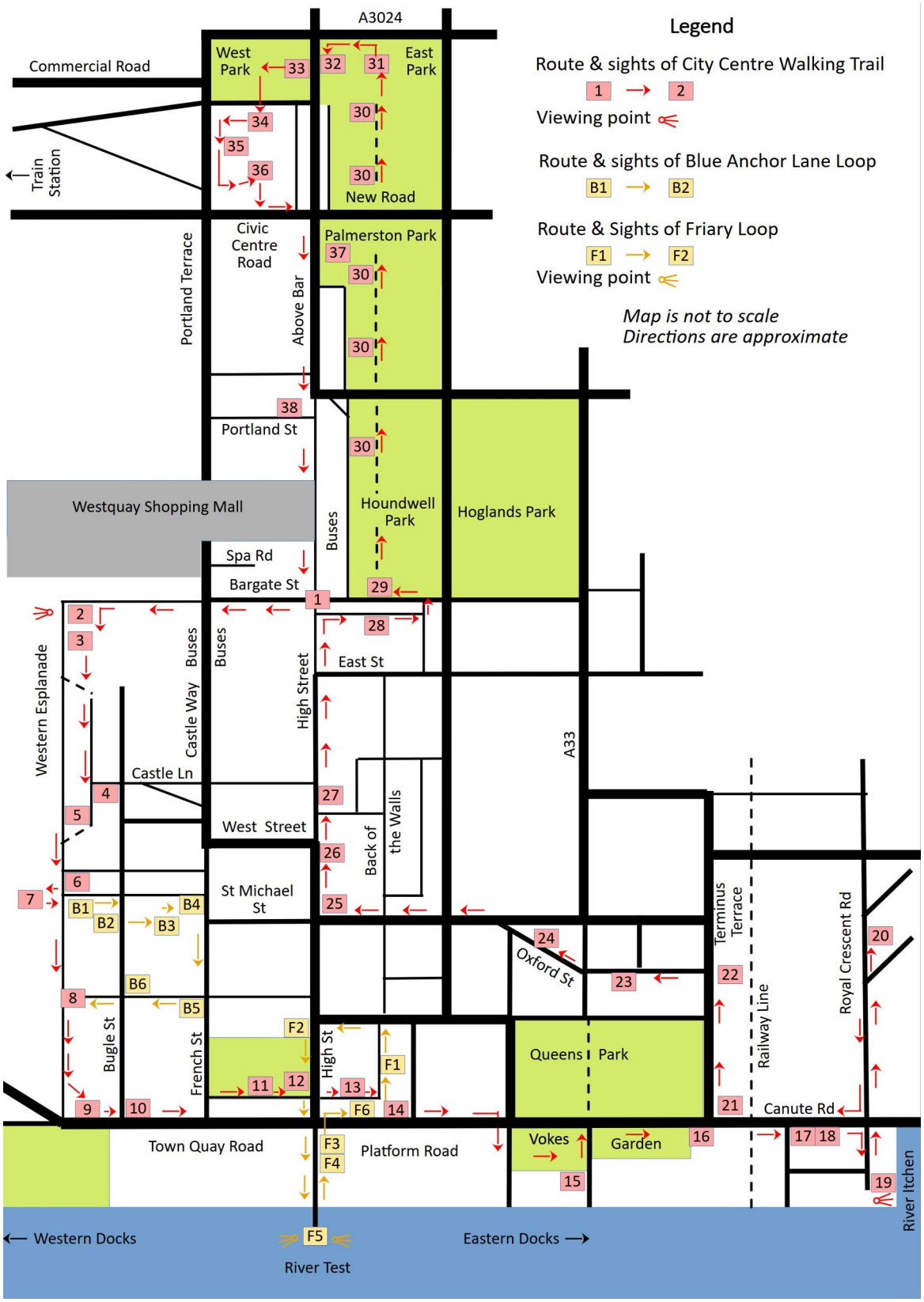
Loop F

F1. Friary Gate & Tower
F2. Medieval Wine Vaults
F3. Town Quay
F4. Harbour House
F5. Town Quay Plaques
F6. Platform Pub

Directions

From the Bargate (1) head west and climb the metal stairs to the walkway which runs along the old town walls and goes over the busy main road (Castle Way). You pass a statue of John Le Flemyng before climbing Arundel Tower (2). Enjoy the view! After you have climbed back down, walk south along the wall passing Catchcold Tower (3). Continue past the Masonic Lodge along Forest View to reach Cement Terrace. The half-timbered house on the corner (4) is on the site where Jane Austen stayed with her family after they left Bath. At the end of Cement Terrace take the metal stairs down to reach the Castle Vault (5) to your north. Head south along the Western Esplanade following the line of the old town walls. You soon reach stone arches on your left, the northern section of the arcades (6). Following the French raid of 1338 these were constructed on the back of medieval merchants houses, cutting them off from the quayside. The brick wall opposite (7) is where dozens of American soldiers carved their names while waiting to board their ships and cross to France during the campaign to liberate Europe at the end of World War II. Continue south, passing the white pub built into the walls to reach the West Gate (8). Pass through this, noting the slots for its double portcullis, then turn right and walk past Westgate Hall. You can climb up concrete spiral staircase for a view over the water from town wall. Follow the line of the walls to reach the 50 foot column of the Mayflower Memorial (9) among the trees. Note the many plaques

Sketch Map



attached to this. Follow the line of the walls as they curve to the left and join the pavement alongside the busy A33. Pass the white Italianate building, formerly the clubhouse of a Royal Yacht Club and cross over Bugle Street to reach the medieval Wool House (10), now a pub.

Continue east, but pass to the left of the garages and Geddes Warehouse building. Follow the narrow Porters Lane to reach the so-called Canute's Palace (11), which is in fact the shell of a

Norman hall house. At the end of the lane there is a single story stone building to your left. Underneath this building is Quilters Vault (12), which you may be able to see through the grilled window. Cross the High Street and continue east along Winkle Street. The church building to your left is St Julien's Chapel (13). On the corner, pass through Gods House Gate (14) to reach the entrance to Gods House Tower on the south-east corner of the old town walls. Cross over lower canal walk, and continue east with the Southampton Old Bowling Green to your left. At the traffic lights cross the busy A33 to reach dock gate 5. Beyond the gate you can see the curved silver metal roof of the Ocean Cruise Terminal, which is not accessible to the general public. Cruise ships using this terminal dock in berth 46, whereas in 1912 the Titanic moored in berth 44 just to the Continue east with the Vokes Memorial Garden to your left to reach Admiralty House (15). Note the Titanic plaque in the grass in front of this building, and the wall plaque commemorating the First World War soldiers, Old Contemptibles, who passed through dock gate 4 to their troopships.

Keep going east, passing Union-Castle House (16), number 100 Canute Road. Just beyond the Canute Road level crossing you reach the 1899 offices (17)of the London and South Western Railway (LSWR) who operated not only the trains but also, from 1892 to 1922, the docks themselves. Next door is this you reach Canute Chambers (18). In 1912 this building housed the offices of White Star line, and is where crowds gathered for news of their friends and relatives on board the Titanic. At the traffic lights turn right into Ocean Way and continue to the modern marina (19), originally the Outer Dock, which opened in 1842. There is a fine view over the motorboats and yachts to the other side of the River Itchen to Woolston, where Thornycroft manufactured destroyers and Supermarine designed and built their first Spitfires. Retrace your steps to the Canute Road traffic lights and cross over into Royal Crescent Road. Ahead of you is the Solent Sky Aviation Museum (20) where you can learn about Supermarine, the Schneider Trophy, and the Spitfire, and Southampton's industrial heritage. The museum has over a dozen locally built or operated planes to admire. Retrace your steps to the Canute Road traffic lights and turn right along the northern side of the busy road. Continue west to reach South Western House (21), originally built as a railway hotel. Turn right into Terminus Terrace and head north to reach the original 1840 Terminus Station (22) building, now a casino.

Cross the busy road using the pedestrian crossing to reach Oxford Street. The Grapes pub (23) to your left has a plaque telling the story of the Slade brothers, who signed on as firemen on the Titanic. Continue along Oxford Street, passing the old Sailor's Home building on your left. Note the black plaque (24) on house number 5 recording that Cuthbert Taylor, a ship's steward, gave this as his address when he joined the Titanic. At the top of Oxford Street, turn left into Bernard Street. Cross the pedestrian crossing to the north side, where there is some interesting public art. Walk west along Bernard Street to the High Street and turn right to the remains of Holyrood Church (25). After World War II this was left derelict to commemorate the devastation suffered by the city at that time. Outside the church is an anchor from the QE2 and inside area various memorials, including two to Titanic crew. Continue north up the High Street. You pass the Dolphin Hotel (26), formerly a coaching inn and now a student residence. Jane Austen danced here on her 18th birthday. The following building, also a student residence, was originally a branch of the Bank of England. Further north you pass the Star Hotel (27), another former coaching inn. The sign to the left of the coach entrance records the time taken by the service to London.

As you approach the Bargate, turn right and follow the remains of the old town walls east

along York Walk (28), passing York Gate. At Polymond Tower, the north eastern corner of the walls, turn left and cross the road into Houndwell Park. The blue-painted iron column (29) commemorates the introduction of Southampton's gas lights by William Chamberlayne. Walk north up the main path to reach the Pound Tree Road with the children's playground your right. Cross this road into Palmerston Park and continue north along the avenue of lime trees (30) donated by Fred Perkins in memory of his mother. Cross New Road into the East Park. Pass the statue of Richard Andrews to reach the Queen Elizabeth 2 Peace Fountain (31). Turn left and walk through the Rockery to reach Above Bar street and the Titanic Engineering Officers Memorial (32). Cross Above Bar to the Cenotaph (33), which commemorates those killed in action during World Wars I and II. Continue west across the West Park via the status of Isaac Watts, then turn left to the Civic Centre. Cross Commercial Road to each the entrance to the Central Library and City Art Gallery (34), which are free to visit. Note the plaque on this entrance recording the rescue of Basque children during the Spanish Civil War. Continue west around the Civic Centre to reach the Sea City Museum (35), with its Titanic exhibition including a map showing the addresses of the 724 crew members from Southampton.

Continue anti-clockwise around the Civic Centre to reach the main entrance to the Council Offices. Go up the stairs and through the revolving door to the impressive foyer (36). On the walls around this, and up the stairs to the mezzanine level on the first floor, you can find a memorial to the Titanic Postal Workers, the book of remembrance, portraits, and relics from historic ships. Return to the car park outside the main entrance, turn left along Civic Centre Road and then right into Above Bar Street. Hidden in the azalea and rhododendron bushes to your left is a statue of Lord Palmerston (37). Continue south back along Above Bar Street and into the pedestrian shopping precinct. A few yards down Portland Street to your left is a blue plaque (38) commemorating John Everett Millais who was born here, in the street which his grandfather developed. Continue south to reach the Bargate where you started this walk.

Loop B: take the second arch opposite the American wall, passing through the town wall, and climb up the stone floor of Blue Anchor lane (B1) to reach the Tudor House Museum (B2). Opposite is St Michaels Square, named after the church (B3). With the church to your right, you reach the entrance to St Michael's Vault (B4) on your left. Turn right down Castle Way. You reach the Medieval Merchants House (B5). Turn right into the narrow Vyse Lane. Continue past the Duke of Wellington pub (B6), cross Bugle Street, to reach Westgate Street. Ahead of you are the West Gate and Westgate Hall. You have now re-joined the main route.

Loop F: continue north along Winkle Street, passing remains of the half round tower, Friary Gate and Reredorter (F1). Continue along the footpath with the modern Friary House on your left, with its interesting tile artwork. When you reach Briton Street turn left, cross the High Street carefully at the traffic lights, then turn left. You pass the medieval mayor's wine vaults (F2). Continue south and cross the busy A33 at the traffic lights to reach the Harbour House offices (F3). Plaques on the modern building to the south (F4) commemorate to workers who supported D-Day troops and ships which left from here. You can walk to the end of Town Quay (F5) for a nice view of the eastern docks to your left and the western docks in the distance to your left. Return to the junction with the A33, cross to Platform Road, and turn right. You pass the Platform Tavern (F6) with its Titanic plaque. When you reach Gods House Tower you have re-joined the main route.

Walk around Southampton's Civic Centre and Central Parks

The Central Parks were originally town fields used for growing crops and grazing animals. To compensate for building over common land around the original terminus station these fields were re-developed as parks during the 1850s. Today, the Central Parks continue to provide city centre residents and visitors with pleasant green space for relaxing or exercising. A walk around these parks makes a pleasant change from exploring the urban environment, allowing you to enjoy the trees, grass and, in spring and summer, the gardens and flowering shrubs. You pass a number of monuments such as the Cenotaph and Titanic Engineers Memorial, as well as the Civic Centre, Peace Fountain, and the city's mother church, St Mary's. You may wish to visit one of the two art galleries you pass, or the Seacity Museum located inside the Civic Centre.

Sights Shown on the Sketch Map (with web links to further information)

1. Civic Centre Plaques	2. Guildhall Square	3. Hansard Art Gallery
4. Mayflower Studio Theatre	5. City Art Gallery	6. Millvina Dean Garden
7. SeaCity Museum	8. Enclosure	9. Passage
10. Statue of Isaac Watts	11. Cenotaph	12. Water Pump
13. Titanic Engineers Memorial	14. Queens Peace Fountain	15. Andrews Statue
16. Lime Tree Avenue	17. Band Stand	18. Cricket Pavilion
19. City College	20. St Marys Church	21. Central Hall
22. Air Raid Memorial	23. Gas Column	24. Melly Water Fountain
25. Children's Playground	26. Palmerston Statue	27. Prudential Building
28. Portland Street	29. Millais plaque	30. Clock Tower

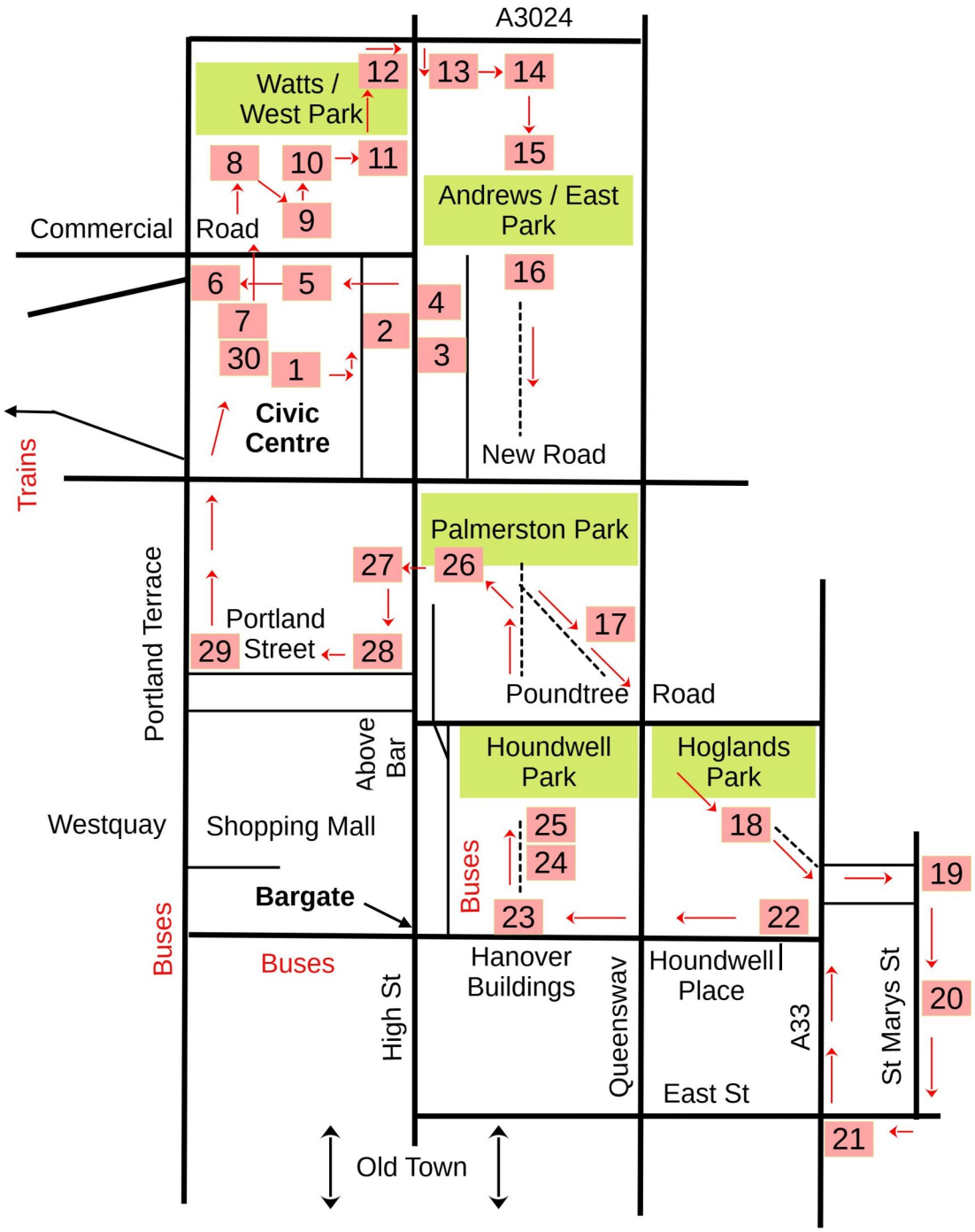
Directions

Start your walk on the south side of the Civic Centre (1). Go up the stairs and enter the Council buildings. The Civic Centre was used by the US transportation corps who operated Southampton as their 14th Major Port from July 1943 to the end of the war. During the Blitz, a 500lb bomb killed 35 people in the Civic Centre, including 15 children at a class in the Art Gallery. On the right side of the foyer, there is a World War 2 plaque. Up the grand stair-case and on the right of the door into the council chamber is a memorial to the Titanic Postal Workers, made from a spare propeller. Leave the Council building, turn left, and go around the Civic Centre anti-clockwise. You reach Guildhall Square (2) with the main O2 Guildhall to your left and University of Southampton buildings to the north and south. Across Above Bar Street (also called the QE2 mile) you can see the John Hansard Art Gallery (3) and Mayflower Studio Theatre (4).

Continue anti-clockwise around the Civic Centre until you reach Southampton City Art Gallery (5). This is free to enter, as is the Central Library, which has many books about Southampton in the floor below. Follow Commercial Road west to the Millvina Dean Garden (6) on the corner. Millvina was the youngest passenger on the Titanic, just 9 weeks old, and its oldest survivor when she passed away aged 97. Her mother, who also survived, brought her back to Southampton. Millvina stayed in Southampton until she retired to the New Forest. Just to the south is the SeaCity Museum (7). The first floor tells Southampton's Titanic Story using original artefacts, recordings, re-enactments, models, and maps. Double back to the north and Cross Commercial Road carefully to enter the Watts or West Park. Ahead of you is Enclosure (8), a modern art installation. Turn

right and south to reach Passage (9) another modern art installation. A short distance to the north of this is the statue of Isaac Watts (10), the famous hymn writer who was born and brought up in Southampton. To the east you reach the Cenotaph (11), designed by Edwin Lutyens to commemorate Southampton members of the armed forces who died in World War I. The names of those who died in World War II have been added on green glass panels alongside.

Sketch Map



Take the footpath north from the Cenotaph to reach an 1840 Water Pump (12). This was used to reduce the dust from stage coaches along London Road. Exit the park and turn right along the busy inner ring road. In front of the offices opposite there is a small white monument dedicated to the Titanic Musicians. Cross east over Above Bar Street and turn south to reach the rather larger Titanic Engineers Memorial (13). Walk east through the rockery to the Queen Elizabeth II Peace

Fountain (14) which commemorates the former queen's contributions to world peace. South of this is the statue of Richard Andrews (15), a famous local coach builder and five times mayor. Walk south through the avenue of lime trees donated in memory of his mother by Fred Perkins (16), also five times mayor of Southampton. Continue south along this avenue and cross New Road.

You have now entered Palmerston Park. Continue south, then turn diagonally left, heading south-east with the Bandstand (17) to your left. This was put up in 1999 after the original 1885 one was damaged by bombs in World War II. Cross diagonally into Hoglands Park and continue south-east. You pass a cricket pavilion (18), now used as a music studio. The park has areas for skateboarding and basketball, and is also still used for casual games of cricket and football. Exit from the south-east corner, and take the pedestrian crossing over the busy A33 dual carriageway. A little to the north is Harrison's Cut, an alleyway named after another former mayor who married to a relative of Jane Austen. Opposite the exit from this alley is City College (19). This was built on the site of a former workhouse, which still forms the main front building. Turn south down St Mary's Street, passing St Mary's Church (20), surrounded by pleasant green grounds, the former graveyard. The original church on this site served the Saxon settlement here, called Hamwic or Hamtun, from the 700s. The current church dates from the 1950s, replacing the Victorian one which was largely destroyed in World War II. Follow the St Mary's Street as it turns west to join the busy A33. On the corner is the Central Hall (21) which was built in the 1920s as the headquarters of Southampton's Methodists mission, and now housing a nursery school, café, and event space.

Use the subway to cross the A33 safely and head north to Houndwell Place. Turn left into this quieter road and follow the fence bordering the southern edge of Hoglands Park. After a few yards you reach the Air Raid Memorial (22) remembering the 631 Southampton residents who died in World War II air raids, and in particular the hit on an air raid shelter at this spot in November 1940. Continue west, cross carefully at the roundabout, then turn right into Houndwell Park at the blue and gold 1822 Chamberlayne Gas Column (23). This remembers the introduction of Southampton's gas street lights a couple of years earlier.

Continue north up the lime tree avenue to reach the water fountain donated by Charles Melly (24) in 1859. This was intended to provide clean drinking water and discourage beer drinking. North of this is a large and popular children's playground (25). Continue north and cross Poundtree Road back into Palmerston Park. Take the diagonal path north west into the azalea garden where you also find rhododendrons and camellias. In the middle of this area is the statue of Lord Palmerston (26), a burgess of Southampton and prime minister for 9 years in total.

On the opposite side of the High Street is the ornate, locally listed, Prudential Assurance Building (27), dating from 1901. Turn left and head south down the High Street until you reach Portland Street (28) on the right. Head along a few yards to the Blue Plaque commemorating the artist John Everett Millais (29), who was born here in 1829. Continue along Portland Street, noting the grade II listed houses on the right. When you reach Portland Terrace, turn right. You should be able to see the Civic Centre Clock Tower (30) ahead. Head north to return to the start of this walk.

Green and Blue Walks Around Southampton

Southampton visitors can easily access and enjoy the central parks, and view the water at Ocean Village and from Mayflower Park. These are all easily accessed on foot from the centre. The city has many other green spaces, and stretches where you can walk alongside a stream, river, or the sea. This guide provides instructions for four walks highlighting some of these opportunities together with some information about the sights you pass along the way.

Before undertaking one of these walks you are recommended to identify the route on a map or your mobile phone. Note that Google may not show you all footpaths, so consider also acquiring a paper map. You should check the weather forecast and take suitable clothing. Footpaths are often muddy so you should wear suitable footwear, particularly if there has been recent rain. You may take a bus, train or car from the city centre to reach any of these walking routes. Remember to identify which services you will use and locate up to date timetables before setting off.

1. Cobden Bridge to Mansbridge and back via South Stoneham and Wood Mill

This walks starts at the Bitterne Triangle end of the Cobden Bridge. Enter Bitterne Riverside Park, and follow the tarmac pathway north beside or near the water's edge for a kilometre or so. You pass a jetty which is a popular place to feed water birds. The river here is tidal, so the view varies as the water level goes up and down. Continue with the playing fields to your right to reach Woodmill Lane at the pedestrian crossing.

Cross this busy road, then continue along footpath beside the river to Mansbridge. The river north of Woodmill is not tidal, so the water level does not vary much. This is therefore a popular stretch for taking canoes and stand up paddle boards onto the water.

At Mansbridge, turn left and take the stone footbridge across the river, then walk alongside the busy A27 for a hundred yards before turning left into Itchen View. Follow this road to the childrens playground in Meadowside Close. The road bends right here but you keep going straight ahead along the footpath, the Monk's Path. Continue along this shingle path, crossing Monk's Brook, then along a short fenced stretch until you reach St Mary's Church. Turn right at St Mary's Church Close then left along Wessex Lane. Follow this, passing the busy University bus stop, with South Stoneham House on your left. When you reach Woodmill Lane, turn left and follow this down to the River Itchen. At the bottom the road narrows where it passes Woodmill. This heritage site houses a Water Activity Centre and Cafe, where you may stop for refreshments by the water.

Once you have passed Woodmill and crossed the River Itchen you reach the pedestrian crossing you used previously. From here you can retrace your steps back to the start at Cobden Bridge.

As this is a circular walk, you may start at a different point if that is more convenient. There is a regular bus service through Bitterne Triangle and Cobden Bridge, and likewise at Wessex Lane.

Further reading:

Cobden Bridge	Bitterne Park
Mansbridge	St Marys Church, South Stoneham
South Stoneham House	Country Houses of Southampton

2. Sholing Station to Netley Station via Weston Shore and Victoria Country Park

Before you start this walk, check the tide times in Southampton Water. Make sure you are walking at or near a low tide so you can enjoy walking along the beach at Netley rather than following the road through this village.

Start at Sholing Station. Exit the station then turn right onto Station Road and right again onto Spring Road. Follow Spring Road down the hill and cross the busy A3025 to the Golden Jubilee Butterfly Walk, part of the Shoreburs Greenway. The path goes through woodland alongside or close to a stream, which you will follow down to the River Itchen and Southampton Water. When you reach Archery Road, turn left to cross the stream, then climb the stairs, which take you up to Archery Road. Cross this road carefully and re-join the path taking you downhill through the woods. If you are not sure which path to take, choose the one which heads downhill and close to the stream. You finally exit onto Victoria Road and turn left to reach Southampton Sailing Club, which is on Southampton Water.

From the Sailing Club you can step down onto the shingle beach. At low tide you can follow this all the way to the entrance of the Royal Victoria Country Park in Netley. If it is not low tide, or you prefer easier walking, there is a tarmac pavement which takes you along Weston Shore and Weston Parade, but still next to the seafront. Opposite Weston Shore is the confluence where the rivers Test and Itchen meet, which is formally the start of Southampton Water. Once past the Sailing Club you reach the green open area of Weston Shore, which has a number of notice boards and public art works with information about the bird life. Continue along Weston Shore to reach Weston Parade.

There are public toilets at the junction of Weston Lane and Weston Parade, where you will also find a café and mini golf course. Beyond this you follow the Parade with its art deco beach shelters and children's play areas.

In the car park at the end of the Parade there is often an ice cream van. Beyond the car park the path goes under some trees until you reach Tickleford Stream. Looking back from this point you have a great view over the whole of this shoreline, and the Eastern Docks in the distance.

Cross Tickleford Stream and continuing to the south-east. At Woolston Sailing Club the cycle path turns inland to climb an area of grassland before joining the road. Instead follow the coast path which goes alongside the beach, with Netley Castle to your left. Continue until you reach Netley Playground and, on the far side of the green, Beach Lane.

From Beach Lane you can continue along the beach at low tide. This stretch has no path, so you will need to walk on the shingle and sand for about three hundred yards to reach Netley Cliff

Sailing Club. You can then climb the slipway to reach Victoria Road at the entrance to Royal Victoria Country Park. Alternatively you can avoid seaside walking by following Beach Lane up to Victoria Road, then turning right through the village and keeping straight on to the Country Park.

Once inside Royal Victoria Country Park head straight on to Royal Victoria Hospital Chapel, whose ornate tower is easy to see. Rather than following the road, you can walk across the green spaces used as playing fields. There is a small café at the Chapel. To the right is a jetty and popular beach area. Continue your walk by going inland from the Chapel to reach the parking area, then left to reach the main café and toilets. Take the Hamble Rail Trail path which starts here. When you reach the paved Albert Road, turn left and immediately right into Hound Road.

After fifty yards take the narrow path to the left. (If you reach the railway bridge, you have gone too far.) Follow the path, which runs parallel to the railway and leads you to The Badgers cul de sac. Follow this road to Netley Station, where this walk ends. You can catch a train to return to the start. Trains call at Sholing and Netley Stations once an hour. Alternatively, both are served by frequent buses which also connect with Southampton city centre.

Further reading:

Local railway history
Shoreburs Greenway
Royal Victoria Country Park
Mayfield Park
Netley Castle

3. St Denys Railway Station to Bitterne Railway Station

Exit the station via Platform 4 and turn right at the South Western Arms onto Adelaide Road. At the end of this road continue past the Junction Inn onto the pedestrianised section of Horseshoe Bridge. Before the bridge crosses the railway line, turn left down to the Itchen Riverside Boardwalk, part of National Cycle 23, signed to the City Centre. Follow the boardwalk to the end, then continue along the footpath beside the river until you reach and go under Northam Bridge.

At the end of the footpath, turn right and walk along Drivers Wharf until you reach the busy main road (A3024). Turn sharp right to double back along the Northam Bridge and cross the River Itchen. You can drop down off the pavement and walk along the narrow Northam Bridge Park to get away from the traffic. Cross the A3024 safely at the traffic lights by the entrance to the Industrial Estate.

After crossing, turn right and continue alongside the A3024 (now called Bitterne Road West) to reach the footpath into Bitterne Manor Park. Cross the park and exit onto Vespasian Road. Follow this until it turns right and changes name to Chafen Road. Follow Chafen Road to the end where you re-join the A3024. Turn left and left again to reach Bitterne Station.

There is one train per hour from Bitterne Station to St Denys, departing from Platform 1. Alternatively, you can take one of the frequent buses from the stop opposite, which will take you back to the centre of Southampton.

Further reading:

Clausentum
Northam Bridge
National Cycle Route 23
Bitterne Manor House
Local Railway History

4. Walking Across the Itchen Toll Bridge

Start this walk at the crossroads where Canute Road, Ocean Way, and Royal Crescent Road meet, just outside Ocean Village. Head north and turn right into Albert Road at the Solent Sky Aviation Museum. Take the steps at the end of Albert Road which lead you onto the bridge.

Follow alongside the busy main road (A3025). Looking south you can see Ocean Village to the right (east) the more recent development of the Woolston riverside to the left (west). Some of the local rowing and sailing clubs may have craft out on the water below you. Looking down Southampton Water toward the Solent you may see a ferry, cargo ship or cruise liner coming in or out of port. On a clear day you can also see some of the Isle of Wight in the distance.

It is not recommended to cross the busy road. Instead wait until you are back over land. You can then take the stairs down to Bridge Road in Woolston, cross under the Northam Bridge, and turn right into Garton Road. From here you can climb up to the north side of the bridge. Follow alongside the A3025 to cross back over the bridge.

Looking north from the bridge you can see Southampton's Football Stadium, St Mary's. Looking down, you can see both ends of the old Itchen Ferry route. The wide slipway on the western side of the river was used in the 1960s by a hovercraft service to the Isle of Wight. You may also see the medieval cross house where passengers would wait for the ferry boat to take them across the river. Crosshouse Road, below the bridge, is named after this ancient building. In the distance you may see the south downs near Winchester.

When you reach the end of bridge, take the pedestrian ramp or stairs on the right down to Crosshouse Road. Turn south onto Canute Road and follow this back under the Northam Bridge back to your starting point.

If you don't want to walk back over the bridge, there are many buses which cross the river from Woolston, and continue to the centre of Southampton. These pick up passengers from the Bridge Link Road near the toll booths at the far end of the bridge, and can drop you off in either on Central Bridge, near the start of this walk, or else in Canute Road itself.

Further reading:

Itchen Ferry Village and the ferry	More details of the village and ferry through the centuries
Seaspeed Hovercraft	More about Southampton to Cowes hovercraft services

Further Walks

There are four long distance walking routes which pass near or through Southampton: the England Coast Path, Itchen Way, Solent Way, and Test Way. Walking the full length of any one of these takes days rather than hours. Note that, despite their names, only some sections of these routes are directly alongside the water. There are other local walking opportunities, and 20 of these are described in the book Hampshire Waterside Walks by Nick Battle and Peter Carne. Southampton also has eight greenways which take you through the green area alongside one of the city's streams – but these do not typically offer views over open water. The best water views within the city are of one of our two rivers, or Southampton Water, for example via the walks described here.

Green Southampton Walk

A seven mile walk via the Common, Lords Wood, and the Sports Centre. The route passes by or near to five pubs and two cafes. Depending on the timing of your walk you may want to stop in one or two of these. It may be wise to check their opening times before you set off. It is recommended you walk this route on a warm dry sunny day. If it has been raining recently, some of the paths may be muddy, so wear suitable shoes.

Start on the Avenue at the junction with Northlands Road. There is a bus stop here, or you can park nearby in Cemetery Road. Walk up alongside the Avenue to the Cowherds Pub. Follow the restricted roadway north into the Common from the pub car park in front of the Cowherds. You pass the childrens playground on your left, followed by the boating lake. Where the main paths cross in the middle of the common, turn right. Take the underpass which goes under the Avenue.

Once you have crossed under the Avenue and climbed up the other side of the underpass, turn left along the gravelled path to the left and follow this path to the busy Highfield Lane. Cross this via the pedestrian crossing. (Note that the Crown Inn is 100 yards from here down along Highfield Lane.) From the pedestrian crossing, follow the footpath to the busy Burgess Road. Take the pedestrian crossing to reach Glen Eyre Road and follow this up the hill. At the mini roundabout turn left, continuing along Glen Eyre Road. When you reach the Avenue, cross back over using the nearby pedestrian crossing.

From the west side of the Avenue, follow Golf Course Road down the hill, taking care to avoid any cars. After the car park, turn right and follow the footpath which runs north along the middle of the hedgerow. (You have just passed Bowlers Bar in the club house on the left, which serves drinks and food during the day.) Climbing up the slope at the end the footpath brings you to Hadrian Way. Follow Hadrian Way over the motorway to the crossroads with Roman Road. Turn left and follow Roman Road (which is really a track) down the hill and under the motorway. Continue along Roman Road through the woods.

At the end of Roman Road, turn left along Manor Road, which becomes Chilworth Drove. (If instead you turn right along Manor Road, the Chilworth Arms is just 100 yards away.) Follow Chilworth Drove with the Science Park to your right. You cross over the motorway once more. Where the road bends to the right continue straight on along using the footpath. Follow this path through the wood (Lordswood) until you reach Coxford Road. Follow Coxford Road until there is a footpath on the left. (If you reach Grafton Gardens you have gone too far.) Take the footpath to reach the Bike Park in the Sports Centre.

Walk down the hill with the Bike Park to your right. At the bottom of the hill turn right. After the changing room / toilet block, take the left fork. Follow this path which zig zags up the hill to the View Bar and Eatery. Cross the Sports Centre car park to the far side and leave by the Hill Lane exit. Follow Hill Lane to reach the busy Winchester Road. Cross over Winchester Road using the pedestrian crossing. Continue along Hill Lane a few yards further to reach another pedestrian crossing. This brings you to an entrance to Southampton Common.

Use this entrance and follow the path into Southampton Common. Take the first right turn. Follow this main path down the hill, passing the Ornamental Lake. Continue along the main path to reach the Bellemoor Road exit. (The Bellemoor pub is just over the road from this exit.) Continue along the main path past the exit then take the left-hand fork. This new path takes you to and through a large open area. Continue along this path to cross this open area, then into some trees. You will soon reach the Hawthorns Wildlife Centre on your left. Hawthorns has a cafe which serves drinks and food during the day. Continue along the path past Hawthorns to reach Cemetery Road where it joins Northlands Road. You are now back at the start of the walk

The Common:

In 1228 the Manor of Shirley renounced their claim to the common in favour of the burgesses of Southampton. As this was common land, residents could use it for grazing their animals. Each household had the right to put two animals to pasture on the common any day. A cowherd was employed by the town to help oversee this grazing, and maintain gates and fences. Up to 8 drovers were then employed by the cowherd to collect and return animals to the town. There was a pound where animals could be collected at the end of the day, near Poundtree Road. There are still some remains of a pound near the Bellemoor Road exit. The last recorded grazing was in 1879: the Cowherds landlord had two cows and some other residents had horses.

Traditionally a Court Leet met at the Cut-thorn Mound on the common. This was a local criminal court presided over by the Mayor and other town officials. Residents could refer disturbances of the peace, encroachments, or inaccurate weights or measures. This court moved to the Bargate in 1616 and at present is held in the Council Chamber of the Civic Centre. Citizens can still present issues and the court decides whether to pass these on to the City Council.

A horse race was first held on the Common in 1804 and racing continued from time throughout the 1800s. If you look at a map showing the Common paths, some of the racing course is still visible.

The Common has also been used as an Army camp and for military training since Victorian times, at least. During World War I a planned camp covered the Common including a hospital block and a camp church. During World War II the Common was used as a marshalling camp prior to D-Day housing 8,500 soldiers. One relic survives: an ARP (Air Raid Precaution) post just north of the underpass on the west side of the Avenue.

Casual sport became increasingly popular and in the 1920s thirty football pitches were in regular use. People also played golf. Since the opening of the Sports Centre, however, organised sport on the Common has declined. People still play football, however, there is a popular park run and also the Southampton marathon.

Starting in 1873 agricultural shows were occasionally held on the Common. Fairs are frequent held. A Garden Show and Fete was popular after World War II. In 1952 this became Southampton Show, and then the Balloon and Flower Festival which ran until 2004.

Car parking proposals led three Southampton civic societies to take the Council to court in 1969. The 1971 Southampton Common Act then defined what uses and closures were and were not permitted.

In 1960 it was proposed to build a Zoo on the Common, and this opened in 1961. This was initially popular, but by the 1980s this was looking shabby, and public attitudes had changed. The Zoo closed in 1985 and the Hawthorns Common Study Centre was opened on the site.

The Avenue:

In Norman times and earlier it was common to keep your animals in part of your house. Cattle and other farm animals were driven from the old town up the Inner Avenue to reach the Common for grazing. Sheep and other animals may also have been driven into the town for their meat and wool.

Traditionally each parish was responsible for maintaining its own roads. This system did not work well, however, for main routes with significant through traffic. Starting in the 1600s, turnpike trusts took over responsibility, funding maintenance via road tolls. The Avenue was planted with trees along its entire length in 1745, during the Spa Period. In 1752 an Act of Parliament approved a turnpike trust to manage the final section of the route from London to Southampton. Their turnpike way reached Southampton in 1758. The main route into Southampton now ran along the Avenue rather than the traditional route via Swaythling, Portswood and Rockstone Lane.

Over time, stagecoaches increased in speed, reliability and popularity. By the early 1800s, the Red Rover could reach London in under 8 hours. Southampton coaching inns included the Star and the Dolphin, both of which can still be found on the High Street. There was a toll gate at Red Lodge where the route divided and some coaches headed toward Shirley. Richard Andrews was a famous Southampton coach builder, and became mayor five times.

Trams used to run up and down the Avenue. The first trams in Southampton were horse-drawn, starting in 1879. These were electrified starting in 1900. The last Southampton tram ran in 1949. The "lucy box" opposite and a little down from the Cowherds originally supplied electricity to the trams.

The Sports Centre and Golf Course:

The sports centre was proposed by Sir Sydney Kimber, who was twice Mayor, and knighted for his services to the city. The proposal was agreed by the Council in 1933, and the Ministry of Health provided a loan of £45,000. The Golf Course opened in 1935. The Golf Course has a memorial to the police horse *Warrior*, who died on 22 August 1935, having served in World War I.

The main Sports Centre was opened in 1938 by the Duke of Kent. This was extended in 1973 with a dry ski slope. When the Council offered female football training sessions in 1990, 200 girls

turned up for the first session. Southampton was rated fittest city in the UK by Mens Fitness magazine in 2006.

People have been in the area for a long time: flint hand axes have been found on the Common. This route passes *Chilworth Ring*, the site of an Iron Age Hill earthwork just north of the Golf Course. It also follows part of *Roman Road* in Chilworth, which was presumably originally roman. The name *Drover Road* may signify another traditional drove route into Shirley.

The walk also passes through some of the fine woodland of Chilworth Common and Lordswood. Lordswood extends a mile or so west from the route explained here, reaching Rownhams. There are many paths and streams in the wood, which can be confusing, and boggy in the winter, but it is certainly popular with mountain bikers.

Further Reading:

Hayes & Stokes: A Walk up the Avenue (2021), A Walk Around the Common (2022).

The Common	The Avenue	The Sports Centre
Court Leet	The Cowherds	Stone Age Hampshire
Hawthorn Cottage	Stage Coaches	Chilworth
Balloon Festival	Red Lodge Toll Gate	Lordswood
Common Acts	Trams	Rownhams

Timeline of Southampton's History (*with web links to further details*)

120 Antonine Itinerary states the Roman settlement of Clausentum is 10 miles from Winchester
280 Romans enclose Bitterne Manor / Clausentum inner town with a stone wall, nine or ten feet thick
700 By now, Hamwic is established in the St Mary's area with an active port, craftworkers, and mint
837/840 Viking raid on Hamwic, followed by further raids from time to time over the next 200 years
920 The Burghal Hidage record identifies Southampton as a burh or Saxon fortification
994/5 King Olaf and his Viking raiders overwinter in Olaf's Tun (now known as Woolston)
1000 By now, a Saxon settlement and defensive ditches exist in the current old town
1016 The Saxon Witan (royal council) meeting in Southampton accepts Cnut as King of England
1070 St Michaels Church is founded, following the Norman Conquest in 1066
1154/5 Southampton is given its earliest known borough charter; its castle is rebuilt in stone
1194 Richard I lands in Southampton after he is ransomed; he spends Christmas in the castle later that year
1204 Tax records suggest Southampton is the third largest port after London and Boston
1228 By an agreement made in the King's court, the Common is acquired from the manor of Shirley
1275 Grant of Custom (tax) on Exported Wool, Woolfells, and Hides
1337 Start of the Hundred Years War is followed by the 1338 French raid on Southampton
1348/9 Around a quarter of the town perish in the Black Death
1397 Portswood is incorporated into Southampton
1414-20 William Soper constructs war ships for Henry V including the Grace Dieu
1420 The town take over the Franciscan friary water system
1445 The burgesses obtain a charter as a corporation; Southampton is a county with its own sheriff
1453 End of the Hundred Years War with the French taking control of Gascony and Bordeaux
1545 Battle of the Solent, during which the Mary Rose sinks off Portsmouth
1554 Philip of Spain lands in Southampton on his way to marrying Mary Tudor in Winchester
1554 Southampton granted monopoly on export wools and sweet wine imports to/from the Mediterranean
1567 Protestant refugees are granted the use of St Julien's chapel, and introduce serge cloth manufacture
1591 Elizabeth I visits Southampton and is presented with a petition of thanks by the protestants
1611 Map of Southampton by John Speed shows the castle, town walls, gates, quays, and St Mary's church
1618 The now redundant Southampton castle is sold by James I to property speculators
1620 Mayflower and Speedwell depart from Southampton for America
1664-6 Around 1200 inhabitants die in the Great Plague (Black Death)
1693 Shipbuilding sites are developed alongside the River Itchen at Chapel and Northam
1710 The Itchen Navigation canal opens to transport agricultural produce and coal
1720s Earl of Peterborough constructs Bevois Mount, a country house and estate north of the old town
1740 A mineral water spring is discovered near the Bargate and in 1750 Frederick, Prince of Wales, visits
1742 Nathaniel St Andre purchases the Dolphin, which he later redevelops as a fashionable Georgian hotel
1753-65 turnpike acts for stage coach routes between Southampton, neighbouring towns, and London
1761 Long Rooms are founded by John Martin, who already runs a bathing establishment
1781 A factory for naval rigging blocks is built at Wood Mill alongside the existing corn mills
1799 Northam Bridge opens, and a second toll bridge connects Southampton via Bursledon to Portsmouth
1806-9 Jane Austen lives in a house off Castle Square rented from the Marquis of Lansdowne
1820 First steam packet service to the Isle of Wight, followed in 1823 by a service to Le Havre
1823 The Admiralty take over responsibility for overseas mail from the Post Office Packet Service
1832 Richard Andrew's coach factory is established in Southampton; he was elected mayor five times
1833 Princess Victoria opens the Royal Pier for services to the Isle of Wight, Channel Islands, and France
1835 Municipal Reform Act creates an elected Borough Council with the power to levy rates

1836 Parliament authorises the Southampton Dock Company to construct a dock at Southampton
1836 The steam-powered Woolston Chain Ferry starts operation
1840 The London to Southampton Railway opens, the first to reach any port in the south of England
1840 The newly formed Peninsular and Oriental Company (P&O) decides it will operate from Southampton
1840 Royal Mail Steam Packet Company is contracted to provide mail services to the West Indies
1841 Ordnance Survey move from London to the Inner Avenue and create a map of Southampton (1846)
1842 The first or outer dock formally opens; P&O ships Tagus and Liverpool were the first ships to use it
1846 The Royal Yacht Club's club house opens, with Prince Albert in attendance
1851 The enclosed or inner dock opens; three dry docks were constructed between 1846 and 1854
1854 Bevois Valley estate (aka Bevois Mount) is advertised as building land in Hampshire Chronicle
1856 Queen Victoria lays the foundation stone of the Royal Victoria Hospital in Netley
1857 Union Steam Ship Company starts mail service to South Africa
1861 The Southampton Isle of Wight and South of England Royal Mail Steam Packet Company Ltd is formed
1865 Imperial Hotel (later known as South Western Hotel, and then South Western House) opens
1883 Cobden Bridge opens, and was promised to be "free to the public for ever"
1889 Railway line to Portsmouth and Brighton via Netley and Fareham opens
1892 LSWR takes over the Southampton Docks to protect its investment and fund further development
1894 Ellen Wren's tragic death, which leads to redevelopment of the old town slums around Simnel Street
1895 Bitterne Park, Banister, Redbridge and Shirley are incorporated into Southampton
1904 The John Thornycroft company buy a shipyard in Woolston and start manufacturing destroyers
1912 White Star Titanic's maiden voyage to New York; over 640 crew from Southampton die when she sinks
1914-18 During World War I seven million troops leave from Southampton, no. 1 military embarkation port
1919 Cunard move their express New York passenger services from Liverpool to Southampton
1920 Bassett, Bitterne, Peartree, Sholing, Swaythling, Weston, and Woolston are incorporated
1924/7 Southern Railways Act authorises land reclamation to form the western docks and Mayflower Park
1926 Cigarette production begins at the British American Tobacco factory neighbouring Regent’s Park
1931 Supermarine win the Schneider Trophy with their S.6B plane
1932 Southampton buy the airport now it is no longer needed for military planes and refugees
1932-39 Southampton Civic Centre is constructed incorporating police station, art gallery and central library
1935 Municipal golf course opens; in 1938 the rest of the sports centre complex opens
1936 Spitfire's first flight takes off from Southampton Airport
1939 Flying boat services operate from Southampton docks to Sydney (Imperial) and New York (Pan Am)
1940 Bombs destroy Supermarine factories in Woolston; 631 die in World War II air raids on Southampton
1944 Starting from D-Day on 6th June until the end of the war, 3.5 million troops leave from Southampton
1952 The University of Southampton, formerly the Hartley University College, is granted its Royal Charter
1953 Ford buy a former aircraft factory in Wide Land to manufacture cars and (from 1972) transit vans
1954 Harefield, Millbrook, Redbridge, and part of Thornhill are incorporated
1964 Southampton is granted city status because of its growing population, large port, and economy
1966 Hovercraft passenger service to the Isle of Wight, followed by hydrofoils (1966) and catamarans (1991)
1968 Start of container port, the 900 foot berth 201, begins operation
1969 Queen Elizabeth II maiden voyage from Southampton and the first Southampton Boat Show
1975 M271 opens, followed by the M27 (1983) and M3 from Winchester to Southampton (1995)
1976 Lawrie McMenemy's Southampton team win the FA Cup, beating Manchester United 1-0
1977 Itchen Toll Bridge opens; Lordshill District Centre opens
1997 Southampton becomes a unitary authority, regaining independence from Hampshire
2000 The main Westquay shopping mall opens; in 2001/2 Southampton is 7th in the national retail rankings
2004 Queen Mary 2 is named in Southampton, at the time the largest passenger ship in the world

2021 Horizon Cruise Terminal opens, with a solar powered roof and a shore to ship power connection
2022 After 800 years, the Mayor of Southampton is granted the title of Lord Mayor

Timeline of Medieval Southampton (*with web links to further details*)

1070 St Michaels Church is founded
1124 Henry I founds the Priory of St Denys after his son dies in the 1120 White Ship sinking
1153 Henry II is crowned and takes back control of Southampton Castle to rebuild it in stone
1180 Construction of the Bargate begins around this date
1185 God's House Hospital is established
1194 Richard I spends Christmas in Southampton Castle after his ransom is paid
1204 Tax records suggest Southampton is the third largest port in England
1217 The first record of a Southampton mayor
1228 The Common is acquired from the manor of Shirley
1237 Franciscan friary is established
1275 Grant of Custom on Exported Wool, Woolfells, and Hides
1290 Friary is granted permission to pipe water from Shirley
1300 Southampton is one of the leading wine ports in the country, importing wine from Gascony
1311 Friary allows burgesses of the town to extend use of water to the town
1319 Five Venetian galleys reach Southampton
1320 Edward II decrees that Southampton is one of eight ports allowed to export wool
1337 Hundred Years War starts when France take control of Gascony (English since 1152)
1338 Fifty French ships raid Southampton, burn the town and take away valuable wine and wool
1343 God's House Hospital becomes part of the property of Queen's Hall (now College), Oxford
1348/9 Around a quarter of the town perish in the Black Death
1380s Stone walls completely encircle the town to protect from attacks by sea
1380s Genoese carracks and Venetian galleys re-open trade in wool, spices and other luxuries
1400 Gods House Tower is built to provide cannon fire to the south and east of the old town
1414-20 William Soper constructs war ships for Henry V including the Grace Dieu
1420 The town take over the Franciscan friary water system
1434 Venetian and Florentine galleys are visiting Southampton for trade
1445 The Southampton burgesses obtain a charter as a corporation
1453 End of the Hundred Years War, with Gascony now part of France
1460 Riots between Pro- and Anti-Italian factions led by John Don and John Payne respectively
1486 Florentine merchant Cristoforo Ambruogi / Christopher Ambrose, becomes mayor
1530s Export of wool from Southampton starts to be replaced by export of cloth from London
1538 Franciscan Friary is closed and sold as part of Henry VIII’s dissolution of the monasteries
1543 Southampton sea captain is granted the right to privateer against France
1545 Battle of the Solent, during which the Mary Rose sinks
1550s Merino wool from Spain is acknowledged as equal that of the finest English wools
1554 Philip of Spain lands in Southampton on his way to marrying Mary Tudor in Winchester
1554 Southampton has a monopoly trade in wool and sweet wine with the Mediterranean
1558 French take Calais, a wool staple port since 1363, and the last English possession in France
1567 Protestant refugees permitted to use St Julien's chapel; they start serge cloth manufacture
1577 London-based Spanish Company is granted a monopoly on trade between England and Spain
1585 War with Spain legitimises privateering against Spain and its allies
1588 Southampton unable to supply its quota of 3 vessels to defend against the Spanish Armada (*)
1591 Elizabeth I visits Southampton and is presented with a petition of thanks by the protestants

1611 Map of Southampton by John Speed shows Southampton still confined within its town walls
1618 Southampton Castle, now in a poor state of repair, is sold by James I

Timeline of Southampton Infrastructure (*with web links to further information*)

1820 Gas works, gasometer and gas street lamps are installed in Southampton
1844 Royal South Hants Hospital is built in Newtown, then a rural setting
1855 Southampton School of Art, now part of Solent University
1862 Hartley Institution — this became the University of Southampton in 1952
1863 Antelope Ground, used for county cricket and then for football by the Saints
1863 Five time mayor Fred Perkins donates a lime tree avenue to the town
1866 New St Mary's Workhouse is built — now part of City College
1887 Southampton Art Society is formed, and later sets up the Southampton Art Gallery
1889 Central Library — originally located in St Mary's Street
1902 Southampton General Hospital opens as a workhouse infirmary on the Hollybrook estate
1920s Central Hall — headquarters of Southampton's Methodists
1932 The municipal office block opens, the first part of the Civic Centre, followed by the police station and law courts (1933), guildhall (1937), and finally the art gallery and library (1939)
1935 Southampton Golf Course opens, followed by Outdoor Sports Centre in 1938

Timeline of Southampton Docks (*with web links to further information*)

1836 Parliament authorises the Southampton Dock Company to construct a dock at Southampton
1838 Admiral Lucius Curtis lays the foundation stone, watched by around 20,000 people
1842 The first dock (also known as the outer dock) formally opens on the west side of the River Itchen
1850s The P&O offices are built at Oriental Place on Canute Road
1851 Ships start using the second dock, an enclosed basin called the inner dock, officially opened in 1859
1890 Queen Victoria opens the Empress Dock, to the south of the original docks
1892 LSWR take control of the docks, to secure their investments and enable further expansion
1911 The White Star dock opens, now called the Ocean Dock, on the east side of the River Test
1924/7 Southern Railways Act authorises land reclamation to form the western docks and Mayflower Park
1928-34 Four hundred acres of mudflats are reclaimed to form the western docks and Mayflower Park
1937 Flying boat services reach Africa and America
1950 Ocean Terminal opens, but is demolished in 1983 and a new Ocean Terminal opened in 2009
1960s The inner dock is filled in and the outer dock is renamed Princess Alexandra Ferry Terminal
1968 Berth 201, the original container ship berth, begins operation
1977 Southampton Container Port formally opens
1986 The inner dock is redeveloped again, this time as a luxury marina, part of Ocean Village
2014 Berth SCT 5 opens, providing 500 metres of quay and a water depth of 16.5 metres

Timeline of Southampton Railway (*with web links to further information*)

1834 Parliamentary Assent is given for the construction of a railway from London to Southampton
1838 The railway reaches Woking, special trains to Epsom races are mobbed
1839 The London and Southampton Railway company changes name to London and South Western Railway
1840 The London to Southampton Railway opens, the first to any port in the south of England
1840 Terminus Station opens, first called Southampton Station, then Southampton Docks, Town and Docks
1847 Southampton to Dorchester Line opens, via Blechynden Terrace station & tunnel under the Marlands
1848 Waterloo station first opens, which later replaces LSWR's original London terminus, Nine Elms
1865 Redbridge to Andover (Sprat and Winkle) line opens, also links Southampton to Romsey and Salisbury
1866 Southampton to Netley line opens, with new stations at Woolston and St Denys
1871 Railway runs from Terminus Station to the Royal Pier, until 1921
1889 Railway line from Netley and Fareham connecting Southampton to Portsmouth and Brighton
1921 Railways Act merges LSWR into the newly formed Southern Railway, which starts operating in 1923
1939 Imperial Airways Empire Terminal connects London Victoria & the Southampton Flying Boat terminal
1966 Southampton Terminus and Northam station are closed
1967 London to Southampton railway is electrified

Historic Maps of Southampton

Southampton is sited between the Rivers Itchen and Test. The Itchen flows from Winchester down through the east of Southampton and the Test flows through Stockbridge and Romsey down along the west of Southampton. These two rivers meet near the centre of Southampton and form a tidal estuary known as Southampton Water. The Hamble River joins Southampton Water at Hamble-Le-Rice, about 4 miles south-east of Southampton. Three miles further south-east, Southampton Water joins the Solent, the straight separating the Isle of Wight from the mainland. As the port authority chart illustrates, the approach to Southampton is strictly managed to ensure that large and small vessels can all navigate these waters safely. This chart shows 4 marinas on the Itchen, 1 on the Test, 5 on the Hamble, and well over a dozen sailing clubs.

See https://www.southamptonvts.co.uk/admin/content/files/PDF_Downloads/A3%20Chart.pdf

The Tudor Team's article on Hamwic has a map showing the sites of Clausentum, Hamwic, and Southampton Old Town, and also the historic and current shorelines. In 1967 the Hampshire Field Club published an article by David Hill why Clausentum was used as the Saxon defensive refuge by the residents of Hamwic (which is also spelled Hamwih). This article has a similar map. It is clear that the River Itchen has tended to silt up, which gives a further reason for relocating south and west to a site bordering the River Test. You will note that Hill's map also shows Hamtun separately. Some believe that Hamtun and Hamwic were different names for the same place, whereas others think they were different settlements.

See https://teamtudor.wordpress.com/2018/08/29/exploring-southampton-the-anglo-saxon-settlement-of-hamwic/
and https://www.hantsfieldclub.org.uk/publications/hampshirestudies/digital/1960s/vol24/Hill.pdf

When Henry II married Eleanor of Aquitaine in 1152, their combined territories stretched from the border with Scotland to the north down to the border with Spain in the south. Henry ruled England and parts of Wales and Ireland. He was also controlled Normandy, Maine, Touraine, and Anjou in the north of France, and one of his sons ruled Brittany. It was written at the time that *Aquitaine overflows with riches of many kinds, excelling other parts of the western world to such an extent that historians consider it to be one of the most fortunate and flourishing of the provinces of Gaul. Its fields are fertile, its vineyards productive and its forests teem with wild life.* With such large and important French possessions Henry II and subsequently his son Richard I spent most of their time in France, with courts in Angers and Chinon. Inevitably, there was regular conflict with the King of France, who was nominally feudal lord of all France.

This situation had significant effects on Southampton during Norman and medieval times. Southampton is a convenient port when travelling from the royal cities of Winchester and London to Cherbourg in Normandy. Following the loss of his son William in the White Ship off Barfleur, Henry I established St Denys Priory. Under Henry II and Richard I, Southampton Castle was re-built in stone and King's Vaults constructed. Wine imported from France, and particularly Bordeaux and Gascony, was shipped to Southampton and stored in the town's many vaults. The later period of conflict known as the 100 Years War opened with a raid on Southampton. The town walls were subsequently extended to include the south and west, facing the water. Before sailing to France before the battle of Agincourt, Henry V reviewed his fleet, establishing a naval tradition. God's House Tower was extended in 1417 to provide eight gun-points and roof top cannon firing points.

See https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:France_1154-en_(Angevin_Empire).svg

John Speed published a map of Southampton in 1611. This shows the layout of the streets within the old town, which surrounded on two sides by water and on the other two sides by fields. The field have subsequently been built on, or turned into parks, and much of the water is now reclaimed land. Most accommodation is within the old town, although there are some houses along East Street, which bends north to pass St Mary's Church. It is curious that Southampton's mother church was outside the walls, and had to be reached by passing through the East Gate, which no longer exists. Residents attended the churches in town for regular services, but these did not have graveyards, so funeral processions passed along East Street, and the funerals and burials took place in St Mary's.

There are also some houses shown along the section of the High Street north of the Bargate, which we now call Above Bar. The map shows the old names for these streets, which are mostly different to their current ones. In fact, only French Street, Simnel Street, Castle Lane, and the initial section of East Street still have the same names as shown on this map. The modern Back of the Walls is labelled Beyond Ye Wals on this map and the High Street is still known as English Street. A few streets shown on this map no longer exist, for example Broker Lane, and the modern city has new roads such as Queensway and Platform Road. Mostly, however, the street layout is still the same. About half the medieval town walls and gates still exist, although little remains of the impressive castle, which still dominated the town. West Quay and Town Quay both jut out into the water, which the latter still does today.

See https://visitsouthampton.co.uk/blog/the-three-john-speeds

Thomas Milne's 1791 map shows that the layout of the old town has changed little in the last 180 years, and the old walls are still intact. More areas outside the walls have been built up. There is a beach shown to the south of Porter's Mead, the modern day Queen's Park. Next to Town Quay some wharves have appeared, a canal runs around the north and east, and two rope walks are shown to the east of the old town. To the west, bathing houses are shown, the larger of which also included assembly rooms. As well as the traditional churches, Quaker and Presbyterian meeting houses now appear. Some street names still differ from the current ones. For example Star Inn Lane is now Eastgate Street, and Pitts Lane corresponds to Bernard Street. The modern Britton Street and Western Esplanade still do not exist, although a short stretch of road does connect the two bathing houses.

See https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?search=milne+1791&title=Special:MediaSearch&go=Go&type=image

Jessica Vale studied the rise and loss of country houses and estates around Southampton, many of which were built between 1700 and 1850, say. Her map shows 43 of these, mostly within the current city boundary, all in areas which were still country-side at the time of Speed and Milne's maps. Each house had a large number of bedrooms for family members and guests, separate quarters for servants, and extensive grounds. The money used to build and run these estates came from outside. Usually the farmland was converted to a pleasure park and gardens. Often the existing house was demolished so a new stylish residence could be constructed in its place. As its population grew, however, Southampton expanded. The population was 10,000 in 1800, 40,000 by 1850, 110,000 by 1900, and 180,000 by 1950. To house these extra people, the country estates were bought up and re-developed as suburban or urban housing estates. The main country house was often demolished at this time, or perhaps repurposed as a school, or converted into flats. Of the country houses Vale identifies, only ten remain, although none is still a family home: Grove

Place is a retirement village; Chilworth Manor is a hotel and conference centre; Rownhams House is a wedding venue; Townhill Park and Bitterne Grove are independent schools; Barnfield, Crabwood House, Netley Castle, and Peartree House have been converted into flats; South Stoneham house is currently empty. Some of the lost houses and estates are remembered in local streets named after the house, the estate, or its owners.

See https://www.hantsfieldclub.org.uk/publications/hampshirestudies/digital/1980s/vol39/Vale.pdf

In 1846 the Ordnance Survey published their first map of Southampton, at a scale of 60 inches to a mile. This covered the full Borough of Southampton from Hill Lane and the River Test to the west, Burgess Road to the north, and the River Itchen to the east. There were still fields within this boundary, although the old town itself is now surrounded by buildings. The Ordnance Survey 1870 map shows the additional housing built in the mid 1800s. Bevois Mount is still shown as a country estate, but there are recent houses on its southern and eastern borders. The area south and east of Southampton Terminus Station has been occupied by industrial buildings such as shipyards, warehouses, and wharves. Railway lines run from the newly finished docks south of Porters Mead, where there was previously a beach, to reach Town Quay and the Royal Pier.

See https://www.southampton.gov.uk/arts-heritage/history-southampton/historic-maps/1846-map/
and https://www.southampton.gov.uk/arts-heritage/history-southampton/historic-maps/1870-map/

The Southampton Drink map of 1878 was published by the St Mary's Church Temperance Society. This shows public houses and alehouses selling alcoholic beverages, hoping to encourage sailors and other visitors to a teetotal area highlighted on the map. Apparently the map failed in its objective, as its targets were attracted to drink rather than its absence. The total number of pubs, and their density in certain streets, is astonishing. The modern pubstops maps shows over that over 150 traditional and new pubs still exist. A list of Southampton's lost pubs is available at the closed pubs web site, however, and lists over 200.

See https://visitsouthampton.co.uk/blog/southamptons-pub-history
and https://pubstops.co.uk/index.php?route=product/product&product_id=171

A famous series of guide books for railway and road travellers included a map of Southampton. The 1884 edition of Black's Hampshire guide includes a map of Southampton. By this time the Eastern Docks are substantially complete, although the "New Docks" shown here were in fact still being built. North of the docks, there are wharfs and shipyards on the west bank of the River Itchen. Denser housing can be seen to both sides of the main railway line to London, but there has been only limited development on the east side of the Itchen, and it was still possible to enjoy a pleasant around the West Bay, following Western Shore Road from the Royal Yacht Club, passing the Victoria Rooms and Spa to reach Millbrook Shore Promenade.

See https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:EW(1884)_p.111_-_Southampton_and_Environs_(bottom)_-_A_%2B_C_Black_(pub).jpg

Southampton's first had trams in 1879. The initial, horse-drawn, routes ran through Shirley, Portswood, and from the Floating Bridge to the High Street. Trams went under and through the main Bargate arch; later on they went round. The Southampton and District Transport Heritage Trust have published a map showing the network in around 1895. The Corporation took over operations in 1898 and introduced the first electrically powered trams in 1900. Trams continued to run in Southampton until the 1940s when they were replaced with a fleet of diesel buses.

See http://www.sadtht.co.uk/trams.htm

When the Titanic left Southampton on 10th April 1912 most of the crew, around 725 out of 908, were from Southampton. Only 175 of them were saved when she hit an iceberg and sank five days

later. An interactive map shows where each of them they lived, and whether or not they survived. The Captain, John Smith, lived in Winn Road off the Avenue. Most of the crew, however, were from poorer areas such as St Marys, Nicholstown, Freemantle, Woolston and Northam.

See https://historicsouthampton.co.uk/crew/

The maps on the disused stations web site of passenger stations serving Southampton docks show the extensive network of railway lines, stations, and cargo sheds which had developed by the mid 1900s. Many of these have been lost since then. Terminus Station and its one remaining railway line are now closed to passenger traffic, the lines to Town Quay and the Royal Pier have been covered over, and at the Outer Dock you now find the Ocean Village apartment blocks, restaurants and marina. There are two cruise ship terminals at The Western Docks south of Millbrook and Central Stations, but passengers arrive here by car or coach rather than by train.

See http://www.disused-stations.org.uk/features/southampton_docks/index.shtml

The timeline of Southampton's expansion on this web site shows when these areas were incorporated into Southampton, starting with the Common and Portswood in medieval times, and then a later expansion starting from 1895, during the development of the docks. These suburbs are well served by local buses and trains running to and from the city centre.

See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Template:Southampton_suburbs_map
and https://myjourneysouthampton.com/media/4008/southampton-public-transport-map-may-2023.pdf

The Ordnance Survey (O/S) was founded in 1791 to survey and produce maps of Great Britain for military planning purposes. In 1841, following a fire at their London offices, they moved to Southampton. Their first location on London Road was originally designed as a Napoleonic cavalry barracks and had also served as a branch of the Royal Military Asylum housing up to 400 orphans. In 1969 the O/S moved to a new site in Maybush and then in 2011 to Adanac Park. These days O/S maps are more likely to be in digital form than on paper. Indeed, in 1995 the UK became the first country in the world to complete a programme of large-scale electronic mapping.

See http://sotonopedia.wikidot.com/page-browse:ordnance-survey-offices-london-road

In 2012 the Open Data Institute (ODI) was set up in London directed by two Southampton professors with the goal of supporting new businesses exploiting government data. During the pandemic, the ODI assisted with the publication of data about Covid-19. The city council's Data, Intelligence and Insight team have developed an open Data Observatory for the city with graphs and other visualisations to help make sense of the large amount of data now available.

See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Open_Data_Institute
and https://data.southampton.gov.uk/

The council's interactive map lets you see, for example, places bombs were dropped in World War II, by ticking the select box labelled "History and Heritage" then removing all ticks below WW2 Bomb Sites. Though the interface is awkward, this map let you view some interesting information.

See https://www.southampton.gov.uk/media/gxfbhldj/central_parks_map_for_web_tcm63-429571.pdf

One final map shows Southampton's Central Parks. These are easily accessed from the High Street or the inner ring road. The West and East parks have many statues, monuments, and works of modern art to enjoy. There is an impressive avenue of lime trees, and many shrubs and flowers. Houndwell Park has a popular children's play area and Hoglands has spaces for outdoor games.

See https://www.southampton.gov.uk/media/gxfbhldj/central_parks_map_for_web_tcm63-429571.pdf

Pre-History and Early History

The City Council published in 2010 a list of 16 local areas of archaeological potential around Southampton. Many of these have already provided evidence of pre-historic people and settlements, some of which you can view in the local museums. Finds include 70,000 year old stone age hand axes, burials, hoards of Saxon and Roman coins, and a bronze age rapier.

The record of Antonine Britain, *Iter Britanniarum,* mentions a settlement called Clausentum, 10 miles south of Winchester. This is generally accepted to be the fortified Roman town inside a bend on the east site of the River Itchen in the area now called Bitterne Manor. Excavations here have uncovered Roman coins, milestones, a bath house, and a stone defensive wall. The stones from this wall were likely re-used in later buildings such as Bitterne Manor House, the nearby Peartree House, and possibly also Peartree Church. The route of a Roman Road to Chichester is marked by a plaque on Fremantle Common at the junction of Spring Road and Peartree Avenue.

In the centuries after the Romans left Britain, Anglo-Saxons arrived, conquered, and established kingdoms, including Wessex. A trading port was established on the west side of the River Itchen, opposite and a little downstream from Clausentum. This port was known as Hamtun or Hamwic, where a "wic" is a trading settlement (such as Sandwich or Norwich). Hamwic was relatively prosperous. There is evidence of manufacture with copper, iron and bone being excavated together with tools such as knives, and signs of textile and leather work. Many coins (sceattas or silver pennies) from the Southampton mint have been found. It is estimated that up to 3000 people lived in Hamwic at its peak. There was a Saxon minster here, which was later renamed St Mary's by the Normans, and the current church is said to be the sixth on the same site. The wealth of the Saxons is also indicated by the grave goods buried with a young woman on the site of St Mary's Football Stadium; these include two glass beads, a silver intaglio ring, and a gold pendant with garnet insets. A plaque above the entrance to 83-85 Brinton's Road commemorates Hamwic, while numbers 61-67 are decorated with some designs from Saxon sceattas.

There were a number of Viking raids on Hamwic, starting in 837/840. The site was not easily defended, and the settlement gradually declined. Under Alfred, King of Wessex, a system of burhs or forts was established, including one here. It is not certain where the burh was actually located. It is possible that the Roman fort was re-used for defensive purposes. Certainly there are Saxon burials in Clausentum / Bitterne Manor, so they clearly crossed the water from time to time. It is also likely that residents of Hamwic moved south and west to the area where the old town is today. There is archaeological evidence of Saxon defensive ditches in the southern part of the old town facing onto the River Test. It is suggested that "Southampton" indicates a new settlement to the south of the original town of Hamtun. This name, spelled Sudhamtune, appears in an Anglo Saxon charter from 962, though Hamtun continued to be used in some later documents.

In the late 900s Sweyn, King of Denmark, and Olaf, King of Norway, invaded and battled with Ethelred, King of England. A treaty was signed in 994 and Olaf stayed overwinter on the east of the River Itchen in an area now known as Woolston. Sweyn briefly took the throne of England in 1013 before Saxon monarchs resumed control. In 1016, however, his son Cnut, known as Cnut the Great was accepted as King of England by the Saxon Witan in Southampton. (Some sources claim Cnut was crowned here, but his coronation was in London a year later.) Cnut ruled England until he died in 1035 and was succeeded by his sons. By 1042, however, the Saxons had reclaimed the throne, only to lose it again to William the Conqueror and the Normans in 1066. These tumultuous

national events no doubt affected local people and their circumstances. At the time of the Domesday Book in 1086 the population of Southampton was perhaps as few as 1000, a significant drop from the time of Hamwic, suggesting that many of its inhabitants had moved away from the coast to safer places inland.

The town of Southampton, now a city, was established therefore following a period of contraction and two relocations, with each new settlement south-west of the previous one. The Normans, however, built a motte-and-bailey castle here, among over 700 others in William's 21 year reign. After the conquest, therefore, England was well defended and there were no more Viking raids.

Sadly, no Roman, Saxon or Viking buildings exist today in Southampton. The account above is based on archaeological evidence and extracts from historical manuscripts. To see this evidence yourself you would have to visit library archives and view museum exhibits. From this point on, however, Southampton's history is visible as you walk around the old town and city centre: there are still buildings dating from every century in Norman, medieval, and modern times.

Further Reading

Southampton: Local Areas of Archaeological Potential
Southampton in the Stone Age
South Hampshire in the Stone Age
Antonine Itinerary
Information about Roman Bitterne Manor (Clausentum)
Further Information about Roman Bitterne Manor (Clausentum)
Bitterne Manor House
Southampton Stories: a Saxon woman
Hamwic as an important trading port for Hampshire and beyond
Hamwic: Anglo-Saxon predecessor of Southampton
The Battle of Southampton (837 or 840 AD)
The Burghal Hidage: Southampton
Saxon defensive ditches in Southampton Old Town
First Anglo-Saxon charter which mentions SUTHAMTUS / SUDHAMTUNE (962 AD)
Olaf Tryggvason in Southampton (994/5 AD)
The War Between Kings Sweyn, Ethelred, Edmund Ironside and Cnut (1002 – 1016 AD)
Cnut, "King of all England and Denmark and the Norwegians and of some of the Swedes"
Southampton in the Domesday Book
Southampton Castle

Norman and Medieval Southampton: War, Wine, and Wool

William the Conqueror ruled as King of England from 1066 to 1087. He was also Duke of Normandy, a title he held from 1035. William the Conqueror's 1086 Domesday Book, originally kept in Winchester, recorded manors and other major properties so that they could be taxed, continuing the earlier Danegeld system. With 185 households, Southampton was in the top 20% of the settlements recorded in the Domesday book.

After William the Conqueror's death his son Robert became Duke of Normandy and his son William Rufus was crowned King of England. When William Rufus was killed hunting in the New Forest, the English crown passed to his brother Henry, William the Conqueror's youngest son. Recently returned from crusade, Robert disputed Henry I's claim to the throne. In 1106, however, Henry I defeated Robert in Normandy and kept him in prison for the rest of his life. Henry I then took the title Duke of Normandy himself.

Henry I's control of Normandy was challenged by the French King Louis VI until peace was agreed after a battle between these two in 1120. Following this success, Henry I departed from Normandy for England. Many of his retinue including his son and heir William left a little later in a recently refitted vessel called the White Ship. Tragically this sank soon after leaving Barfleur. The sole survivor claimed that both the passengers and crew had drunk excessive amounts of wine before departing. Meanwhile Henry I was waiting in Southampton for news of William. Henry founded St Denys Priory in 1124 in memory of the lost crown prince and other family members.

William's tragic death led to the Anarchy, a period from 1138 to 1153 when Henry I's daughter Matilda and his nephew Stephen contended for the throne of England. The Anarchy ended when Matilda's son Henry was recognised by both sides as Stephen's successor and was subsequently crowned as Henry II. Henry II's father was Count Geoffrey Plantagenet of Anjou so he is known as an Angevin monarch and also a Plantagenet. Henry II married Eleanor of Aquitaine after her first marriage to the King of France was annulled. Henry II's possessions therefore stretched from the Pyrenees to the border of Scotland, the so-called "Angevin Empire".

Following the Anarchy, when it was held by an ally of Stephen, improvements were made to Southampton Castle. A stone curtain wall replaced the original timber one, and in 1180 the Bargate was constructed at the main entrance to the town. As well as ensuring loyalty to the new king, the fortifications also played a role in coastal defence and provided a secure base for continental trade. Southampton was a convenient port during this time for kings and nobles who were based in or near Winchester to set sail to or from Normandy. Henry II's daughter Joan sailed from Southampton on her way to become Queen of Sicily.

According to Wikipedia "*the popularity of Bordeaux wines increased dramatically following the marriage of Henry II and Eleanor of Aquitaine". "Henceforth the majority of Bordeaux claret was exported in exchange for other goods*". Claret is a word used primarily in England for Bordeaux red wine, or originally a dark rosé. No doubt much of this wine was imported to England via Southampton and stored in one of the many Old Town vaults before being transported inland, or

consumed here. Several of these vaults are similar in design to those in Bordeaux, where much of the imported wine originated.

Gervase Le Riche was a Southampton port reeve (warden). This position involved collecting taxes on trading with the port and its town. As his name suggested, he clearly prospered in this role. It is known that he founded Gods House Hospital in 1185, built West Hall, and helped to ransom Richard I who was imprisoned on the continent returning from the third crusade. On his return, Richard spent Christmas in Southampton Castle. The Castle Vaults were built during this period and were used to store royal goods, no doubt including wine. The Medieval Merchants House was built in French Street around 1290 by John Fortin, a prosperous wine merchant. It has a vaulted cellar for holding stock, a shop at the front of the property and accommodation for the family, and is believed to be a typical example from this period.

In 1275 an Edward I Act of Parliament called the *Grant of Custom on Exported Wool, Woolfells, and Hides* formalised the method for taxing on the export of wool. Customs officers, called customers, were appointed to key ports, including Southampton, where a Weigh House was used to measure the weight of wool being exported. There were several Wool Houses used to store the wool while it was waiting to be exported, one of which survives. There were also searchers and surveyors responsible for ensuring that the correct duty was paid in all ports. These officials provided accounts to the national Exchequer. This system was the origin of the HM Customs service. In addition, duty was payable on imports: tonnage (a fixed rate per tun, or barrel, of wine) and poundage (a proportion of the value of other goods, 1 shilling in the pound, or 5%).

As well as Southampton's medieval buildings, some trading and tax documents have survived. The surviving port tax records in 1204 show that London paid £836 12s, Boston paid £780 15s 3d, and Southampton paid £712 3s 7d, the third highest amount. At the end of the century, in the 12 months from Easter 1290, Southampton exported 2299 sacks of wool. From September 1383 to June 1385, 2818 tuns of wine were imported. In 1395 other imports into Southampton were valued at £13,760 3s 4d. In the 11 months following Michaelmas 1459 other imports were valued at £12,899, while 641 sacks of wool and 8360 broadcloths were exported.

In 1338, one year after the start of the 100 years war, the French recruited mercenaries from Genoa to assist them. Together they raided Calais, Portsmouth and the Channel Islands. Around 50 Genoese and French ships then sailed up Southampton Water and sacked the town. Many people died in the fighting. Valuable goods and port records were lost. After this disaster, and the Black Death 10 years later, Southampton was at a low ebb.

Edward III initiated an ambitious programme of rebuilding, however, strengthening the walls. In 1377 when the French fleet re-appeared they were successfully defeated. In 1400 a tower was built at God's House to house gunpowder and cannons to control the approach to the port. In 1415 perhaps as many as 300 ships took Henry V's troops to France and the Battle of Agincourt. Some of these vessels had been constructed in Southampton by William Soper, twice mayor and Collector of Customs, who became Governor of the King's Ships. In 1457 following a raid on

Sandwich, another French fleet threatened, but the town gunner opened fire from God's House Tower and they retreated.

The Wikipedia entry on the medieval wool trade comments that this was vulnerable to "diverse factors such as war, taxation policy, export/import duties or even bans, disease and famine, and the degree of competition". Nonetheless the reported volume of UK exports remained roughly constant from 1281 to 1545. At the start of this period these exports were sent as raw wool, but from 1346 onwards an increasing proportion had already been woven into broadcloth before export. Wool was exported to Bruges and then Antwerp in Flanders, the centre of a highly skilled weaving industry. It was also exported to Italy, where the Arte della Lana (or wool weavers guild) in Florence employed up to 30,000 workers.

Genoa, for example, was able to establish trade routes to England by 1300, with the first records of visits to Southampton in 1303 and 1305. Genoese ships often brought alum and woad, used in dying cloth, and returned with wool. They might also pick up wine from ports in Spain or France on their way to England to trade with local wine merchants. In the 1380s, moreover, a lull in the 100 years war allowed some exports of wool to resume via Genoese ships. Their larger carracks were able to find safe harbour in the Solent and Southampton water, so this was a popular destination for them.

Venetians also traded with Southampton. The first record of any visit was the arrival in Southampton of five Venetian galleys in 1319. The Venetian traders specialised in high value goods. There was not much space on their galleys, so they preferred to purchase the highest value wool, for example from the Cotswolds. They brought with them exotic and expensive items from the East such as spices and silks. When they unloaded these at Southampton, they were often transported directly on to London, where there was a bigger market for them. At one time there was, however, a Pepper Alley in the Old Town suggesting that some of these goods were sold locally. Once the Venetians switched to larger ships such as carracks and galleons they also started to export wine to England, including Malmsey, a sweet wine from the Malvasia grape grown in their kingdom of Crete.

Because of the volume of trading, the Italians established resident agents in Southampton. For example, the Florentine Bartolomeo Marmora married an English wife and was granted denization (formal residence) in 1417. Another Florentine, Paolo Morelli first appears in the records in 1429. He stayed in Southampton renting the prestigious West Hall until he died in 1448. Italian agents would have a number of clerks working for them, keeping records, making contracts, and sending and receiving letters with local and national news. They were able to warehouse goods and sell them later to get a better price rather than immediately when they arrived and received a commission of 1% or 2% on these deals. Records from 1450-51 show that four firms handled practically all Genoese business in Southampton, the Cattanei's, Spinolas, Di Negro and de Vernaccia. Following riots in London during 1456, the Venetians established a relatively small Southampton office, which may have continued for the next 40 years. Another Florentine,

Cristoforo Ambruogi arrived in Southampton in 1462 and was granted denization in 1472. He adopted the English name Christopher Ambrose and was elected Mayor in 1486 and again in 1497.

It is reasonable to claim therefore that Southampton prospered between 1153 and the early 1500s, say, a period of nearly 400 years. The population increased from perhaps 550 – 850 in 1086 to 1750 – 1950 in 1524. There were bleak and barren years during this period, but the town mostly thrived. During times of peace trade flourished, notably imports of wine from France, Spain, or Crete, and exports of wool or woollen broadcloth. Prosperity is evident in still existing buildings such as the Bargate, Gods House Tower, the Medieval Merchants House, the Weigh House, Wool House, Westgate Hall, and the Tudor House (which was constructed between 1491 and 1518); also in the medieval underground vaults which you can visit on a guided tour of the old town; and the town walls themselves.

Further Reading

Domesday Book	White Ship	St Denys Priory
Angevin Empire	Southampton Castle	Wine Vaults
Bargate	Eleanor of Aquitaine	Joan of Sicily
Portreeve	Gods House Hospital	Wool Tax
HM Customs	Weigh House	Wool House
Medieval Merchants House	100 Years War	French Raid
Black Death	Southampton Plot	William Soper
Gods House Tower	1457 threat	Wool Trade
Arte della Lana	Genoese Traders	Venetian Traders
Italian Residents	Westgate Hall	Tudor House

Southampton In the 1500s and 1600s

In the middle ages, Southampton prospered by exporting wool and importing wine. By the 1500s merino sheep on the Iberian peninsula were used to produce better wool closer to Italy. In 1514 Trinity House was licensed to provide regulated pilots to help ships navigate the river Thames. The economy of London increased, and Southampton's trade declined.

Enterprising residents of Southampton could find other ways to prosper, for example privateering. Robert Reneger, for example, was a merchant who had established trade with Brazil by 1540. He owned at least 3 ships. But in 1545 he intercepted the Spanish ship San Salvadore and made off with cargo valued at over 29,000 ducats.

Queen Mary, a Catholic, was engaged to marry Philip, Prince (later King) of Spain. In 1554 he was welcomed in Southampton with a sovereign salute. Contemporary accounts state that he was welcomed by royal officials who invested him into the Order of St George and the Order of the Garter. He made merry in the palace (castle?) for four days, and over four hundred of his court and their servants were hosted in the town, which was described as rich, fresh and fair. Philip then travelled to Winchester where he and Mary were married. Philip only visited England once more, Mary died childless, and was succeeded by Elizabeth.

Leland wrote in his Itinerary in around 1540 that there are "*many very fair marchauntes houses in Hampton*". But in fact the town's economy was in decline. In the early years of Elizabeth I's reign Southampton built eight vessels of 100 tons or more, cf 62 in London. European trade was coming to an end. Although the Earl of Southampton joined the Virginia Company in 1609 this venture did not generate business for Southampton.

In the 1540s Henry VIII had built forts at Calshot, Cowes, Hurst Castle and Netley to protect the Solent and Southampton Water. The town's medieval walls and castle were therefore largely redundant and burdensome to maintain. When Elizabeth visited in 1591 a payment was made for "makinge readye for her ma'tie a house at Southampton". Staying in the royal castle did not appeal since it housed an abattoir. King James I sold the castle in 1618.

In the 1560s protestant refugees, fleeing persecution in Catholic countries, introduced a new type of cloth called Hampton serge. A Woollen Cloth Hall was built with an open area underneath used as a fish market, and a closed room above for storing cloth. In 1591 the Huguenots presented Queen Elizabeth a petition thanking her for allowing them to settle and to worship in St Julien's Chapel. Their weaving and woolcombing workshops providing valuable employment to the town. Phillipe De La Motte fled from Belgium in 1586 and set up a workshop in Southampton. After Phillipe died his wife Judith continued to run the business until around 1638. In 1609 a company of sergemakers was formed. In 1634 the Cloth Hall was moved from its original position in St Michael's Square to Westgate Street, nearer the West Quay, and is now called Westgate Hall. Westgate Street also had a hall for linen imported from France in exchange for wool. The 1685 revocation of the Treaty of Nantes brought more Huguenot refugees to Southampton, including

several paper makers who used Gaters Mill in Mansbridge as a paper mill. The Company of White Paper Makers Company was set up in 1686 with 3 Southampton Huguenots among its 15 founders.

In 1620 the Mayflower anchored off West Quay to take on extra settlers and supplies for crossing of the Atlantic. She was joined by the Speedwell which was repaired here before both set off. Unfortunately the Speedwell was still not in good shape so the Pilgrim Fathers had to stop again in Dartmouth and Plymouth before she was finally declared unseaworthy. Some passengers chose to stay behind while others continued on the crowded Mayflower.

George Fox, founder of the Quakers, visited Southampton in 1655. In 1662 the historic Quaker Burial Ground was established west of the Inner Avenue. The famous hymn writer Isaac Watts was born here in 1674. His father helped to set up the first nonconformist congregation in the town, which still continues as the Above Bar Congregational Church.

William Capon, rector of St Marys, died in 1550 and left money in his will to establish a grammar school. This opened in 1554 and is still known as King Edward VI School. In 1696 it moved from the original premises in Winkle Street to the West Hall, between Bugle Street and French Street. The Southampton Register Office now occupies part of this site.

Southampton Corporation (council) wrote in 1683 to the Secretary of State that: *it has been a rich place but now is quite the contrary. The latest rebellion despoiled the chamber of all public moneys, in the plague 1700 inhabitants died, the Dutch war robbed them of almost all their ships, and lastly the Act of Prohibition rendered all their looms useless, by which many families were supported are now become burdensome. The public revenues are incredibly sunk; particularly the duty on sweet wines, which heretofore yielded £200 per annum, now scarce brings in £6, by which the Corporation is under great difficulties.*

The Tudor House, which has been restored and is now a museum, was constructed between 1491 and 1518 by Sir John Dawtrey. There are no notable 1600s buildings inside the Old Town, the Old Farmhouse being a mile away. The late 1500s and 1600s were difficult times for Southampton, but fortunately things picked up during the 1700s, the town's spa period.

Further Reading

Merino Sheep	Trinity House		Robert Reneger
Mary and Philip	Leland's Itinerary		Huguenots
Papermaking	Mayflower		Isaac Watts
Quaker Burial Ground	King Edward VI	Tudor House	Old Farmhouse

Ship Building and Sailing in Southampton

Southampton has been a port since Roman times, at least, when there was a settlement, most likely called Clausentum, on the bend in the river at the modern suburb of Bitterne Manor. Shipping continued to be important through the Saxon and Norman periods. Gervase le Riche was a wealthy port warden in the 12th century who contributed to Richard I's ransom. After his release in 1194, Richard landed in Southampton where he spent Christmas in the castle. Henry V's flagship Grace Dieu was built in Southampton by a wealthy local merchant, William Soper, and launched in 1418. Her remains were discovered in the River Hamble in the 1930s.

West Quay was the most important commercial quay in medieval times. It was constructed after the building of the defensive wall cut merchant's houses off from their private quays. In the summer of 1620 the Mayflower and Speedwell sailing ships met in Southampton where they moored of West Quay to provision before sailing off for America. Sadly the Speedwell was too leaky to make the voyage so the pilgrims had to return to Plymouth where they left the Speedwell behind before resuming their journey with only the Mayflower. By the early 1700s much of the West Quay was occupied by small boatbuilding yards. The nearby Duke of Wellington pub, which was originally called the Beerhouse or Brewhouse, changed its name in 1771 to the Shipwright's Arms, but then adopted its present name in 1815, presumably to reflect changes in local priorities.

In 1693 John Winter bought an old manor farm in Northam (known as Nordhannwig by the Anglo-Saxons). He used its marshy water frontage to create wharves and a yard for building ships. Wikipedia has lists of ships launched by year, and these confirm Winter delivered half a dozen naval vessels in the 1690s, a period of conflict with France. Indeed, England and its ally Holland were able to establish control of the sea by outbuilding their enemies, shifting the focus away from traditional land-based defences.

In the 1720s, Daniel Defoe wrote in his Tour Through the Whole Island of Great Britain that "*many of the king's ships were built hereabouts, besides abundance of large merchant ships, which were about that time built at Southampton, at Redbridge, and at Bursleton*". There are records of some naval ships built at Redbridge. Ann(e) Wyatt took over her husband William's Bursledon shipyard when he died in 1693, completed a number of ships there, and the 32 gun HMS Winchelsea in Redbridge in 1694. A century later Hobbs and Hellyer built six vessels to an experimental design by Sir Samuel Bentham, with the HMS Redbridge bought by the navy in 1798.

The Marquis of Lansdowne, Jane Austen's landlord during her 1806–1809 stay in Southampton, was interested in sailing. Another author with a connection to Southampton is Lady Elizabeth Craven, née Berkeley. She owned property in Southampton near the West Quay, and a sign high up the Pig in the Wall shows that this area was known as Anspach Place after her second husband, the Margrave of Anspach. Lady Elizabeth writes that this was "*pleasantly situated near the river*". Lord Lansdowne "*was extremely fond of aquatic excursions*" and wanted to see how well his double bottomed vessel would "*sail without ballast*". The Marquis and his schooner set off from West Quay at noon, nearly high water, on a windy day. Running up the main sail, however, the vessel overset and Lord Lansdowne was thrown out. Fortunately he "*caught hold of the masthead*" while the "*rest of the party … clung to the side of the vessel*". Witnessing the incident, Lady Elizabeth "*ordered out her own boats to rescue the party and had wine prepared to refresh the drenched experimentalists on the beach*". Jane Austen also witnessed this incident.

George Rowcliffe was a ship builder who owned a yard off West Quay. His daughter Mary married Philip Marett from Jersey. When George died in 1744 his widow and Mary continued the business. According to the Wikipedia lists of ships launched by year, the Rowcliffes launched ships for the Navy in 1742, 1745, and 1746. Philip Marett died in 1758 but Mary and her mother continued and expanded their business interests along the western shore. They also combined two small houses to create Westgate House, while Mary's son Charles Marett living above the West Gate. His son, also called Charles Marett, gave up ship building and became a successful lawyer. He was able to retire early in 1825, and continued living in Westgate House. After his death his daughter Hannah Maes lived there, until she died in 1897. The Corporation bought out the Marett leases and knocked down Westgate House to make way for the Western Esplanade. Hannah was known as Madam Maes and was famous for her gracious hospitality to the poor families living close to her home, and allowing local children to play in her garden. A water trough dedicated to her and the rest of the Marett family sits at the bottom end of Western Esplanade on the site of their home.

Cowes Week is a yachting regatta held in the Solent annually, and dating back to 1826. This was organised by a yacht club set up in 1815 which became the Royal Yacht Club in 1820 and the Royal Yacht Squadron in 1833. Its headquarters are in Cowes Castle on the Isle of Wight.

The Southampton Yacht Club was founded in 1837, but changed its name in 1844 to the Royal Southern Yacht Club, after receiving royal patronage. The opening of its club house at the bottom end of Bugle Street in 1846 was attended by Prince Albert and reported in the London Illustrated News. After some lean years, the club was finally able to buy the freehold of this property in 1904. At that time it was still a very male club, and included a billiard room, but it was decided that "*members are permitted to introduce ladies personally known to them and accompanied by them to the coffee room and adjoining veranda between the hours of 12 noon and 7pm*". During World War I the club house was used by "*officers of the Services and it is significant that the figures show substantial increase in revenue for 'Drink' and 'Beds'*". In 1925 the club took additional premises on the River Hamble and in 1938 a Special General Meeting agreed to sell the Southampton Club House and move entirely to the Hamble, where the club has thrived and expanded. This decision came about because of "*the Development of the Port of Southampton which has destroyed it as a yachting centre".*

The Regatta Club dates back to 1866 when they met in Quilter's Public House, whose medieval remains you can see at the bottom of the High Street in Town Quay Park. The club received a royal charter in 1877, and were renamed the Royal Southampton Yacht Club. Their club house was built at 79 Above Bar Street, north of Ogle Road. This grand building was however demolished in 1957, though the club itself continues to meet on the Beaulieu River.

John Rubie was born in Bursledon in 1781. His father and maternal grandfather were both involved in shipbuilding. John worked in shipbuilding with his grandfather, and helped him construct a new shipyard in Warsash. In 1816 John went to Prussia with a new partner to develop steam navigation on the River Elbe. Their steamship Prinzessin Charlotte was the first in Europe. The venture was not a success, however, and John returned to England, and in 1820 settled in Southampton with his German wife Charlotte. In 1824 John took over the Cross House Yard by the River Itchen, building small fishing vessels and, encourage by members of the Southampton Yacht Club, racing yachts and schooners. In 1829 he and his former partner built the wooden paddle-steamer *Emerald* for the Southampton/Hythe and Southampton/Cowes ferry services, the first

steam powered boat built in Southampton. In 1851, the yacht Brilliant, launched by Rubie in 1839, finished fifth in a race around the Isle of Wight, won by the America. This event led to the sailing competition now known as the America's Cup.

Paddle steamships first saw commercial use during the early 1800s. Seaside resorts constructed pleasure piers to allow steamers to moor at any state of the tide. An early example was Ryde Pier designed by John Kent of Southampton, which opened in 1814. In Southampton Town Quay / Watergate Quay was demolished and replaced with a new structure in 1803 for goods and passenger services. This was soon overcrowded, so a second pier was built. The Duchess of Kent and her daughter, Princess Victoria, opened the Royal Pier in 1833. This allowed ships to berth at any state of the tide.

In 1820 the first steamer service connected Cowes and Southampton, and a second firm introduced its own services in 1826. By 1860, these two companies had six steam-ships between them. That year, however, third company started up in competition. The two original firms then agreed to merge and in 1861 formed the Southampton Isle of Wight and South of England Royal Mail Steam Packet Company Limited. This is still the official company name of Red Funnel, whose main office is in Bugle Street, Southampton. Over the years, this company has had a number of different lines of business, including the Cowes floating bridge, summer boat excursions, holidays, tug boats, car ferries, and high speed passenger services. Currently its focus is running ferries.

Red Funnel's paddle steamers and other passengers ships have changed considerably since 1840. To start with steamers were rarely more than 100 foot long and built of wood, but the modern car ferries are made of steel and around 95 metres long. As engines became more powerful, summer steamer excursions reached destinations around the Isle of Wight, west to Swanage, Weymouth, Torquay and Dartmouth, east to Southea, Brighton, and Eastbourne, and south to Cherbourg. In 1934, a day trip to France cost 12 and a half shillings, arriving in France by mid morning, and departing around 4:15pm. By special arrangement, passengers were allowed to go ashore with landing cards rather than passports.

By the 1920s, first class passengers were served by Silver Service waiters, in elegant dining rooms, yet the food was said to be "unsurpassed for moderation in price". The last paddle steamers were the Robina, Lorna Doone and Solent Queen, built in Scotland during World War I, acquired by Red Funnel at the end of World War II, but withdrawn by 1952 and replaced by motor vessels. Ships have been built all over the world, with hydrofoils from Italy, and one catamaran from Australia. Their most common origins are Glasgow (16 ships), Woolston (10 ships), Cowes (7 ships), and Northam (7 ships).

William Summers began his career in Southampton in around 1831 manufacturing steam carriages in Millbrook. In 1834 Summers' partner Ogle was left and replaced new partners to form Summers, Groves, and Day. In 1839 their *Southampton* locomotive ran between Southampton and Winchester until the London line was completed in 1840. In 1839 they also launched their first iron-clad steamship, the *Hampshire Independent*. Their foundry in Millbrook had no water access, however, so in 1840 they started to move operations to Northam, just below the bridge, to a site purchased from John Rubie. This became known as the Northam Iron Works and built ships for the P & O, Royal Mail Steam Packet, Union Line, and Hamburg America companies. They also built 7 of Red Funnel's paddle steams: PS Ruby (1841), PS Pearl (1844), PS Queen (1848), PS Emerald (1857), PS Saphire (1860), PS Princess Mary (1911), and the PS Princess Elizabeth (1927). The business

continued under various names before closing 1928. The final vessel built there was the final Woolston floating bridge (number 14).

In the 1870s, Thomas Ridley Oswald set up a ship building and repair yard in Woolston, based on his experience of building iron-hulled sailing ships in Sutherland. This yard made over 100 vessels between 1876 and 1889, nearly a third of which were steam ships. By 1881 the company, now called Oswald, Mordaunt & Co, employed over 1000 workers in Woolston. Their last ship was a steel and iron petroleum carrier, built in 1889. The company experienced financial difficulties, however, and closed that year. Their yard was taken over by a variety of other ship building companies before being acquired by John I Thornycroft and Company in 1904.

Thornycroft had been building ships in Chiswick on the Thames since 1866 but was limited by the need for their signature torpedo boats to pass under Hammersmith Bridge. In Woolston Thornycroft built 63 destroyers for the Royal Navy before and during World War I, as well as a number of smaller craft. Construction continued after WWI and during WWII they built a range of vessels including corvettes, destroyers, destroyer escorts, minelayers and assault landing craft. The largest vessel built at Woolston during the war was the minelayer HMS Latona, with a speed of up to 40 knots. Thornycroft merged with Vospers in 1966 and continued production at Woolston until 2003, when they closed their Southampton factory, which had over 1200 employees. In 100 years of shipbuilding, Thornycroft had built over 600 vessels in Woolston, including 10 for Red Funnel.

Southampton still has a marina off Town Quay, and larger ones in Kemps Boatyard, Ocean Village, and Shamrock Quay, and many boats are moored elsewhere along the Itchen. Whitbread and Volvo sponsored round the world yacht races which departed from Ocean Village between 1977 and 2001. The Global Challenge sponsored by British Steel and BT started from Ocean Village in 1992, 1996 and 2000, the Clipper Round the World Yacht Race in 2011, and Ocean Globe Race in 2023. The Southampton International Boat Show has been held in Mayflower Park since 1969.

Further Reading

William Soper	Grace Dieu	Town Quay
Ship Launches By Year	HMS Winchelsea	Ann Wyatt, Shipbuilder
John Winter, and Summers & Day	Northam Industrial Development	HMS Redbridge, 1798
Lady Elizabeth Craven	Sailing Incident	The Marett Family
Royal Southampton Yacht Club	Royal Southern Yacht Club	Yacht Club History
John Rubie	Royal Victoria Pier	Red Funnel History
Oswald Mordaunt	Sir John Isaac Thornycroft	John I Thornycroft & Co
Vosper Thornycroft	Southampton Marinas	Southampton Boat Show

Spa Period

From the start of the 1700s Southampton began to attract rich incomers who acquired and developed estates in the countryside nearby. Southampton then enjoyed a period as a spa resort between 1740 and 1840,when it was patronised by royalty, the aristocracy, and Georgian gentry.

Edmund Dummer was born in North Stoneham in 1651. He started work at the Royal Naval Dockyard in 1668. In 1677 he was given the responsibility of standardising the dimensions of naval ships. In 1682 Dummer was sent to the Mediterranean to learn about ship-building practices there. He then had positions as assistant shipwright and assistant survey until in 1692 he became Surveyor of the Navy, and oversaw the development of the royal dockyards in Plymouth and Portsmouth. He designed the first successful stepped stone dry dock in Europe at Devonport. In 1698 he surveyed the harbours along the south coast to assess whether they were ready to defend against possible French invasion. He was elected as MP for Arundel. In 1705 Dummer purchased South Stoneham House and Estate, and commissioned a new house which was completed by 1708. The garden was landscaped by Capability Brown after 1722. Subsequent owners include Hans Sloane (MP), a relative of Sir Hans Sloane who founded the British Museum, and John Willis Fleming (MP). The house and estate are currently owned by the University of Southampton .

Charles Mordaunt, third Earl of Peterborough, was a military commander and a politician who joined the Privy Council. His first wife died in 1709 and in the 1720s Charles married the opera singer Anastasia Robinson and bought Padwell Farm in Southampton and additional neighbouring land. He replaced the farmhouse with a country mansion called Bevois Mount House and improved the grounds of the house, adding a bowling green, vineyard and Corinthian temple as well as various statues, grottoes and walks. Famous writers such as Gray, Pope, Swift and Voltaire visited the estate. The Earl died in 1735 and his wife in 1755. Nearby roads such as Peterborough Road, Earl's Road, and Mordaunt Road recall this significant local landmark.

The poet Alexander Pope described Bevois Mount Estate as "beautiful beyond compare" and claimed that the summer house on top of the mount is "the most beautiful Top of a Hill I ever saw, a little house that overlooks the Sea, Southampton & the Isle of Wight". Writing in 1804 the Sporting Magazine reported that the mansion itself is "celebrated for its internal beauties" and includes "four good marble statues", "very valuable Roman remains" and "an ample orangery, well stocked with productive trees". The grounds were advertised for sale as "twenty two acres of most valuable building land" in the 1854 Hampshire Independent. The mansion itself subsequently used as a school, student hostel, first world war prisoner of war camp, and garage before it was finally demolished at the end of World War II.

Nathaniel St André was Swiss born, but emigrated to England as a boy. He rose to become anatomist to George I in 1723. In 1726, however, St André was involved in a scandal involving Mary Toft, who claimed to have given birth to rabbits, and he lost his royal patron. Then in 1728 a Member of Parliament he was treating died, and St André eloped with his widow, Elizabeth, whom he subsequently married. By 1742 St André, a friend of Alexander Pope's, was living in a house next door to the Dolphin Hotel. He bought these two properties and re-developed them as an enlarged and improved hotel in the 1750s. Starting in 1768, he also built a new house called Bellevue, located in the area north of Brunswick Place incorporating the modern day Ordnance and Bellevue Roads. After his death, his books became the core of Southampton's first public library.

In around 1740, a mineral spring was discovered just outside the old town near the modern-day Portland Terrace. To encourage its use a fountain was installed surrounded by attractive gardens near the modern-day Spa Road. In 1750 Frederick, Prince of Wales visited Southampton for a day and bathed off the western shore. Martin's Baths date from mid 1700s. In 1761 newly built Long Rooms opened alongside these, possibly as an extension. Elegantly furnished, this new venue was designed to attract rich visitors to the spa, for fashionable summer balls and dances, rooms for cards and billiards, and dining salons. In 1764 the poet Gray wrote that "the sea is still full of bathers ... the walks all round are delicious … the climate is remarkably mild". Milne's 1791 map shows the Long Rooms beside the bathing house, and a second one south of the West Gate.

The Dolphin also held dances, and a 1795 Southampton guidebook stated that in the winter these occurred every fortnight from the end of October to the start of May. The dances ran from 7pm to midnight, and in 1781 it was required that each *subscriber do pay 5 shillings for the season,* although a non-subscriber could pay two and a half shillings per evening, and everyone had to pay half a shilling *for their tea on admission.* The rules also stated that *no lady or gentleman shall be permitted to sit down in the middle of a dance, unless they mean to dance no more that night.*

Other members of the royal family visited Southampton. In the 1760s the Dukes of York, Gloucester and Cumberland became social patrons, bestowing their royal favour and frequent presence. George III and his wife Queen Charlotte were welcomed by members of the Corporation in 1789. Prince William attended the Theatre Royal in 1791, for example, accompanied by the Duchess of Bolton. Note that Bath had been a popular spa resort since at least 1704 when Beau Nash become Master of Ceremonies. Nonetheless Southampton also became a popular and fashionable destination.

During this period, the fastest way to travel was by stage coach. The first coach service from Southampton to London probably started as early as 1648. Roads were not reliable, however, so a system of turnpike roads was developed. Each road was controlled by a turnpike trust who charged road users tolls then used this income to maintain it. Turnpike Trusts were established between 1753 and 1765 to provide routes between Southampton and Salisbury, Romsey, Stockbridge, Winchester, Bishop's Waltham, and Botley. All these towns had coaching inns where travellers could refresh, eat a meal, or stay overnight.

Popular coaching inns in Southampton included the Royal York Hotel, and also the Dolphin and Star both of which still exist. Like the Dolphin Hotel, the Star Inn pre-dates the spa period, but was redeveloped during the late 1700s. Another storey was added in the early 1800s. The notice on the wall advertises *Coaches to London (Sundays excepted). Alresford Alton. Performs 10 hours*. This service may have been Collyers Long Coach, which set off at 5am for London and arrived there around 3pm. Over time, journey times improved, and eventually the famous Red Rover could reach London in less than 8 hours.

In around 1745 the Corporation had already begun planting trees alongside the road we now call the Avenue. There were toll gates at Red Lodge at the junction of the Avenue with Winchester Road, where traffic to Shirley leaves the main route into town, and at the bottom of Burgess Road in Swaythling, along the original lower route. In 1840, before the railway line to London was opened, around 10 coaches a day left for London, and 20 provided connections with other towns. Once the railway was established, however, coach services declined rapidly.

The Polygon development proposed in 1768 to create buildings comparable to those in Bath and Tunbridge Wells. The plan called for 12 large houses with elegant gardens adjoining a hotel and assembly rooms. Only three buildings, including the hotel, were completed before money ran out and the developer was declared bankrupt in 1773. The area, still known as the Polygon, was nonetheless gradually occupied by good quality houses and gardens, albeit more modest ones.

According to Vale "*the years 1790 to about 1810 saw the most rapid expansion of country houses around Southampton".* This twenty or thirty year period was responsible for half of the country houses she identifies from the century and a half between 1700 to 1850.

Blighmont house, for example, was built by Admiral Bligh in the early 1800s for his son, who fought in the Battle of Trafalgar; from 1893 to 1917 it was occupied by a grandson of Nelson; it was then used as a World War I hospital, and later a nursing home; the estate was bought by British American Tobacco in the 1920s to house their factory; in 1963 they bought and demolished the house; in 2007, however the factory was closed and replaced by a retail warehouse. Blighmont Avenue and Crescent are two of the local streets.

Peartree Lodge was constructed for the successful local manufacturer Walter Taylor in around 1800. The estate stretched from Portswood Road to Brookvale Road, and was large enough to host the Royal Agricultural Show of 1844, the sixth time this annual event was held. During World War I it was used by the Red Cross to make clothes for troops and was demolished in 1923 when a new housing estate was developed. This includes Abbotts Road, named after a former owner.

Townhill Park was originally farmland bought by Nathaniel Middleton in the 1780s. He had worked as an East India Company official, he joined the Royal Southampton Archers, and became Sheriff of Hampshire in 1800. The farmhouse on the estate burnt down at the end of the 1800 and was replaced by a new house, which was extended by various owners over the next 100 years or so. In 1948 the remaining estate was sold off and the house was converted to a school; it is now the Gregg School. The main building and stable block both have grade II listings.

It was during the Spa period that Jane Austen and her family stayed in Southampton, from 1806 to 1809, after her father died and they could no longer able to afford suitable accommodation in Bath. They rented a house and garden next to the town walls, with views over the River Test to the New Forest. Their property was rented from the Marquis of Lansdowne, who also had a property which still survives in nearby Castle Lane. The Marquis had bought the run-down castle intending to redevelop it, but after he died the scheme failed and the castle was demolished. Though Jane did not write any novels here, her surviving letters show that she thought "*our garden is the best in town*". Jane was familiar with Southampton because she had attended school here as a young girl, and also celebrated her 18th birthday at a dance in the Dolphin. It is known from a diary entry that Jane attended Saints Church and that she patronised the Theatre Royal, both nearby. Her letters also show that danced in the Dolphin Hotel, took trips by water to Hythe and Netley Abbey, and witnessed the Marquis capsizing his small boat while sailing in the Test.

Richard Evamy was born in Dorset in 1765. He moved to Southampton in 1788 and started a business as a "saddler, cap and coach-harness maker". This was a profitable occupation during the Napoleonic Wars when cavalry regiments had set up camp on Southampton Common. From

1811 to 1834 he initiated ambitious property developments including the Spa Gardens, the New Assembly Rooms, and the nearby Portland Street and Terrace which still exist today.

The New Rooms were opened in 1830. After a visit by the Duchess of Kent and her daughter Princess Victoria they were also called the Royal Victoria Assembly Rooms. These replaced the Long Rooms as the principal social venue in the town for the rest of the 1800s. A guidebook from 1849 states that "*on entering from Portland street, there is a lobby with ante-rooms, and from these a handsome staircase conducts to the main building, which consists of the great ball-room 90 feet long, with a handsome card-room adjoining — a wide balcony is carried along the river-fronts of both. Below are rooms of equal extent, for refreshment during balls, and for meetings*".

Richard Andrews was born in 1798 near Alresford, where he learned coach-making. He married after he completed his apprenticeship at 21 year of age, and found work in Southampton. By 1832 he had started his own coach-making business, which quickly grew. In 1845 his firm in Above Bar Street was employing over 200 workers and he sold more than 300 new and second-hand carriages. His customers included aristocracy and the gentry. He even made 3 small pony carriages for use at Queen Victoria's estate on the Isle of Wight. He was elected mayor on five occasions. Four thousand people watched when the foundation stone of his monument was laid in 1860. Another coach manufacturer was Aslatts, also in Above Bar, which was run by John Aslatt and then his son Henry from the early to the late 1800s. There were several other coach-makers in the High Street, so many that a pub near the Bargate was named the Coachmakers Inn.

It is generally accepted that the Spa Period in Southampton came to an end with the development of the railway and docks starting from 1840. The Royal Gloucester Baths which opened in 1826 was a commercial failure and had closed by 1838, perhaps because their site at the start of Canute was too close to the docks. The site was then used for Docks Offices, a Customs House, and Union-Castle offices. None of the Bathing Houses, Spa Fountain, Spa Gardens, Long Rooms nor New Rooms still exist. Remaining buildings from this time include the Star and Dolphin Hotels, Portland Street, Portland Terrace, and Cumberland Terrace to the north of Watts Park.

Further Reading

Edmund Dummer
Bevois Mount House
Bellevue
Stage Coach Travel
Jessica Vale
New Rooms
South Stoneham House
Nathaniel St Andre
Spa Period
Star Inn
Jane Austen
Richard Andrews
Charles Mordaunt
Dolphin Hotel
1795 Guidebook
Polygon
Richard Evamy
Gloucester Baths

Southampton High Street in the 1800s

Starting from around 1750, Southampton began a long period of prosperity. During this time the streetscapes changed to reflect the increases in wealth. These changes can be illustrated by noting some buildings in the High Street dating from the 1800s. The upper part of the High Street, north of the Bargate and formally named Above Bar, was heavily bombed in World War II, so the shops along the pedestrianised section are all post-war. You have to walk quarter of a mile north from the Bargate to reach a Victorian building, built for Prudential Assurance, now flats. The lower part, south of the Bargate, is formally known as the High Street, although it is also colloquially called Below Bar, and in medieval times was known as English Street. The High Street has a variety of historic and listed buildings to enjoy as you walk south from the Bargate toward Town Quay.

Edward Mayes entered into partnership in March 1830 as a draper and mercer, continuing on his own from 1855. Edward was the first of three generations of the family to run this business. It later expanded to occupy numbers 173 to 178 High Street. Their premises were destroyed during the Blitz. After the war the business was taken over by Owen Owen who built a new shop on the same site in 1947. This department store closed in 1983 and its premises, just south of the Bargate, on the west side of the High Street, now house a variety of different shops.

To cater for incoming estate owners and the proprietors of successful local businesses, banks were established. The first of these was formed by a consortium of local businessmen in the 1770s. Originally called the Hampshire Bank it was renamed the Southampton and Hampshire in 1803. Its premises were at 25 High Street. This had a variety of controlling partners: from 1814 these included members of the Atherley family who, in 1830, acquired most of Shirley Common. By around 1885, this land was developed into the Atherley Housing Estate. A second local bank, at 172 High Street, was established in the 1700s by the Maddison family and their partners. The Maddisons lived in Castle Square and Maddison Street is named after them. Their bank changed name to the Southampton Commercial Bank in 1803. It merged with the Southampton and Hampshire Bank in 1869 to form the Union Banking Company before merging with Lloyd's Bank in 1903. The former Martins / Barclays Bank building, just south of the Bargate, is now a jewellers. The former Midland Bank building nearby is now a Chinese restaurant. These are both grade II listed, dating from around 1900. The bingo hall on the opposite side was built for Lloyds bank.

Born in Frome in 1800, Sampson Payne came to Southampton in 1842 and opened a china and glass bazaar at 68 High Street. This business was so successful that Payne was able to move into property development, buying Fremantle House, which he demolished, dividing the estate into plots of land for housing societies and individuals. Paynes Road is named after him.

During the 1800s, the High Street housed a large number of pubs and hotels. Over 40 are shown on the 1848 Drink Map. These days there only two hotels, one pub, but a large number of coffee houses, bars, restaurants and dessert parlours. There were also, in the 1800s, three churches. The medieval All Saints Church was demolished in 1791 and rebuilt on the same site over the next 3 or 4 years. Jane Austen worshipped in this new church building. It was destroyed by bombs in World War II, however, and never re-built. The medieval St Lawrence's church was pulled down in 1839 and re-built in 1842, but this new building was also demolished in 1925 as its congregation was too small. The medieval Holy Rood Church was largely re-built around 1850, retaining some of its 14th century features. This too was heavily damaged during the War, but the

ruin has been converted to a Grade II* listed memorial which is open for all to visit. Its quarter-jacks are small mechanical figures which strike a bell every quarter of an hour.

In 1867 the National Provincial Bank, now part of NatWest, built grand premises at 129 High Street, on the junction with West Street. The building survives, now a coffee shop and jazz club, and is grade II* listed. Mowat's ran a fish shop a few doors down, which dates from around 1870. This business continued until the early 1960s. The building, now a restaurant, is Grade II listed, though the marvellous tiles showing marine subjects are sadly covered over. Holyrood Chambers next door to the left of this restaurant is also listed, built around the same time in a gothic style.

Opposite Holyrood Chambers is the medieval Red Lion pub, which is grade II* listed. To the right is a narrow building dating back to the 1890s, grade II listed, and decorated with circlets of various fruits, after Oakley and Watling's fruit and vegetable merchants. Right of this is the former central Post Office building. The Post Office moved here in 1859, and a new post office was built in 1892 in the Flemish style, three storeys high, using red brick with terracotta dressings. The building survives, although it is now residential rather than a post office.

Henry Robinson Hartley was born in Southampton in 1777, the only son of a prosperous wine merchant. When his mother died in 1821 he inherited both the family home on lower High Street and a considerable fortune. He then devoted his life to study and research, his favourite subjects being natural history, astronomy, antiquities and classics. Displeased with many of the changes in Southampton he left in 1825, living in London and Calais, where he died in 1850. His will left the bulk of his estate to the town in order to fund a cultural centre. The will was contested by his disputed daughter but ten years later work started on the Hartley Institution. This was opened in 1862 by Lord Palmerston on the High Street south of Bernard Street.

Charles Darwin's eldest son, William Erasmus, was a banker in the Southampton and a partner of George Atherley. William was a member of the institution's council for 41 years, starting in 1872. Though the high street building was demolished in 1940, the Institution survived and evolved into the University of Southampton, which received its royal charter in 1952. Behind a hedge on the modern apartment block near the corner with Britton Street is a blue plaque commemorating the Hartley Institution.

Note that the oldest surviving Southampton business is W J French & Son, a shoe shop established in 1803. This shop is currently still run a family member, the ninth to do so, and the first woman. This is not currently a High Street business, however: they originally traded from the founder's house in Kingsland Place, and then moved to a variety of sites, including one in Above Bar. Since 1890 they have been based in Bedford Place, where the business has thrived and expanded.

Further reading

Owen Owen
Sampson Payne
National Provincial Bank
Post Office
Hampshire Bank
1848 Drink Map
Red Lion
Robinson Hartley
Union Bank
Holyrood Church
Oakley & Watling
WJ French & Son

Southampton Docks and Railway

As emigrants and trade spread round the world there was a significant need to send letters and parcels as well as people and freight. From Tudor times until 1823, the Post Office Packet Service operated its own lightly armed fast ships carrying post, parcels, passengers, and occasionally valuable goods such as bullion. On the south coast the designated packet stations used by this service were Dover, Falmouth and Plymouth. During the Napoleonic Wars Falmouth was particularly important, as it was furthest from France and their naval blockade. After these wars ended, however, the Admiralty took over responsibility for this service. Under their new system, successful shipping companies would be contracted to carry mail, passengers and high value cargo.

Improvements in steam engines made it possible to use them as a source of power for transport. In 1807 the North River Steamboat ran a scheduled service along the Hudson River between New York and Albany along the River Hudson, generating a tidy profit. The first successful commercial steamship in Europe, the Comet, began operating a service in 1812 along the Clyde between Glasgow and Greenock, the start of a great tradition of Clyde steamers. In 1818 the SS (steam ship) Savannah was the first to cross the Atlantic from Savannah, Georgia, to Liverpool, taking just under a month. She was powered by a combination of sails and steam power, which remained common for several decades until steam propulsion became more familiar and reliable. In 1838, the SS Great Western, which also had auxiliary masts for sails, began a regular transatlantic service between Avonmouth near Bristol and New York, averaging 7.95 knots on the westward crossing and 9.55 eastward over the next two years.

The Liverpool and Manchester Railway, opened in 1830, provided the first fully steam powered train connection between two major towns (both of which are now cities). Trains carried raw materials, finished goods, passengers, and mail on a double tracked railway. The financial success of this system inspired investors to look for similar opportunities elsewhere. It was natural to think of combining a steam-powered railway with steam-powered ships.

In 1832 a prospectus was issued aiming to raise £1.5m to fund a Southampton railway and new docks. The London and Southampton Railway was approved by Parliament in 1834, and the Southampton Dock Company' proposal was given Royal Assent in 1836. The two schemes were then pursued separately by these two companies for the next sixty years.

The first of the new docks were built on land described as "*mudlands*" on the River Test south of Northam and the Woolston Floating Bridge. In 1838 around 20,000 people watched the foundation stone being laid by Sir Lucius Curtis. This stone, with an explanatory plaque, can now be seen just inside Dock Gate 4. Every since they first opened the docks have continually been expanded and improved as the volume of shipping increased, and as the ships calling in the port have grown ever larger.

The tidal Outer Dock opened in 1842. The first ships to leave from this dock were P&O's Tagus and Liverpool. Three dry docks for ship maintenance and repair were constructed between 1846 and 1854. The Royal Mail Steam Packet Company's ship Forth was the first to use one of these. The Inner Dock opened to shipping in 1851 although work continued until 1859. The first ship to leave the improved Inner Dock was P&O's Pera.

In the 1880s it was decided to build a new and larger dock to the south of the old docks. This was opened by Queen Victoria in 1890, and named Empress Dock in her honour. It was written at the time that "*it is the only dock in Great Britain where deep-water loading and*

discharging berths can be reached by the largest vessels at any time of the day or night, irrespective of the state of the tide".

Dredging Southampton Water was authorised by an Act of Parliament in 1882. By 1889 a 7.4 metre channel had been dredged from Fawley to the docks. By 1996, the channel depth had been increased to 12.6 metres, and in 2000 half a million cubic metres per year were being dredged up.

In 1892 the docks were formally acquired by London and South Western Railway (formerly the former London and Southampton Railway) who had already provide funding support for the Empress Dock. The Royal Pier was also strengthened and lengthened to include a pavilion, tea rooms, and a bandstand, and connected by railway to the Southampton Terminus station.

Three more dry docks were constructed between 1879 and 1905. The grandly named Admiralty House was opened as the main post and telegraph office at the start of the 1900s, and its size confirms the scale of the mail business. The large railway goods shed also still survives on Royal Crescent Road, between Central Bridge and Southampton Terminus station. The White Star Dock was opened in 1911, following White Star's decision to transfer operations to Southampton which then overtook Liverpool as the UK's premier passenger port. Boat trains left from Waterloo at 8:30am and 9:30am. The later train, known as the "*White Star Express*", was principally for First-Class passengers.

During World War I Southampton was designated Military Embarkation Port Number 1. Southampton Water and the Solent helped to protect the port from attacks by enemy boats or submarines. The railway network could transport high volumes of goods and soldiers and 7 million passed through the port.

A new floating dry dock was opened in 1924 by the Prince of Wales, the largest in the world at the time. It could lift vessels weighing up to 60,000 tons and had an internal floor area of more than three and a half acres (1.4 hectares).

The Western Docks were constructed from 1927-34 on 400 acres (160 hectares) of reclaimed land on the edge of the River Test. A single quayside, one and a half miles (2.4 kilometres) was created. The Mauretania docked at berth 102 in 1932, while work was still continuing. Further up river a new dry dock was created and opened by King George V in 1933. This is 1200 feet (365 metres) long, the largest in the world at that time, and can accommodate vessels of up to 100,000 tons. Next to the Royal Pier, around 15 hectares of the reclaimed land were reserved for Mayflower Park where Southampton residents and visitors can still access the water and view the ships.

In 1936, the Southampton docks handled 46 percent of the UK's ocean-going passenger traffic. The 1938 *Handbook to Southampton Docks* provides the following facts and figures:

- Passengers: 560,000
- Visitors: 500,000
- Cruise passengers: 70,000
- Passenger trains: 2,500
- Shipping: 18.5 million tons
- Shipping lines: 32
- World ports served: 160

In World War II Southampton again played a major role. In all, around 3 and a half million soldiers passed through the port. During the D-Day landings, two-thirds of the entire British assault force left from here.

From 1967 to 1996 four reclamation projects created the berths originally numbered 201–207, which form Southampton Container Port on the River Test. The largest container ship to visit Southampton was the 400 metre HMM Oslo which arrived in Southampton in 2020, capable of carrying nearly 24,000 containers. The contain port is the second busiest in the UK, handling around 1.5 million standard container units per year.

As ships have increased in size, the shipping channel has been broadened and deepened. This was first dredged in 1889, to a depth of 7.4 metres, increasing to 8.6 metres in 1893, 9.3 metres in 1907, 11.1 metres in 1931 and the channel is currently 12.6 metres deep all along Southampton Water up to the container port. Around half a million cubic metres of sea and river bed are removed from the shipping channel every year.

The two original docks are no longer large enough for modern ships. The Outer Dock was converted in the 1960s for use by car ferries, and again in the 1980s to form the Ocean Village marina. The Inner Dock and nearby dry docks have been filled in to create space for car parks and offices. The National Oceanographic Centre first opened in 1996 alongside the Empress Dock, where their research vessels can moor, alongside smaller commercial vessels. The White Star Dock, now known as the Ocean Dock, is still used by cruise ships using the new Ocean Terminal.

Southampton is currently the largest cruise port in the UK, with over 400 cruises departing every year, carrying nearly 2 million passengers. There are 2 dedicated cruise terminals on the Eastern Docks and 3 on the Western Docks. Most cruises are one or two weeks long, visiting destinations in northern and western Europe, the Canary Islands and western Mediterranean. Also popular are transatlantic cruises to New York and the Caribbean. During the winter grand voyages and round the world cruises reach destinations in all continents except Antarctica. The port also handles the largest number of vehicles being imported into and exported from the UK, and other freight such as scrap metal and grain. Cargo ships travel to and from destinations as far as Asia, via the Suez and Panama canals. It is fair to say, therefore, that Southampton is still a gateway to the world.

London and Southampton Railway / London and Southwestern Railway

During the Napoleonic wars there were concerns about goods arriving from the west to London. It was proposed to create a route from the south coast to London by linking the Rivers Wey and Arun. The last section, the Wey and Arun Junction canal was completed in 1816, by which time the war with France had ended. Mail and other parcels however still were still sent via Falmouth, which involved a slow and inconvenient road journey. Proposals were put forward and prospectuses published during the early 1830s for a railway between London and Southampton, with a branch heading west to Bristol, and improvements to the Southampton Docks. The first of these schemes was approved by Parliament in 1834, the London and Southampton Railway Company was formed, and construction began. The railway opened in sections from 1838 to 1840, when the route was completed to the new terminus in Southampton near the docks. This station was at various times called Southampton, Southampton Docks, Southampton Town and Docks, and finally Southampton Terminus. The total expenditure was £1.5M.

The railway was immediately successful, and stage coaches from points further west altered their routes so as to connect with it. A branch was planned from Bishopstoke (Eastleigh) to Portsmouth and the company changed its name in 1839 to London and South Western Railway (LSWR). With the opening of a steam powered chain ferry to Portsmouth in 1840, it was cheaper and simpler to extend the railway to Gosport, and this branch opened in 1842. Portswood Station existed for just 5 years before the line to Netley opened in 1866 when it was relocated and renamed St Denys.

LSWR competed with the Great Western Railway to bring services to Devon and Cornwall via Dorset and Somerset. This led to the creation of a station in Blechynden Terrace, near the current Southampton Central, which eventually became the city's main station. LSWR's London terminus was moved in 1848 from Nine Elms to a new station near Waterloo Bridge. Waterloo station was connected a railway bridge to Charing Cross in 1864 and to the Bank of England via LSWR's Waterloo and City underground line which opened in 1898. Southampton was connected by a direct railway line to Andover which opened in 1865. This line was built on the route of the Andover canal. It also provided Southampton with a direct connection to Romsey and Salisbury. The route to Portsmouth and Brighton via Netley and Fareham was finally completed in 1889.

From the start, LSWR also had an interest in the Southampton docks. They formed their own New South Western Steam Navigation company in 1843 and in 1892 bought the docks to continue their development. The synergy between railway and the docks is evident from the many railway tracks which ran into both the eastern and western docks, and alongside Platform Road to the Royal Pier, which had its own station. See the maps on the disused stations web site.

After the Romsey to Andover railway closed in 1967, parts of the old canal & railway route were incorporated into the Test Way long distance footpath. The station at Nursling had closed earlier in 1957. Southampton Terminus and Northam Station closed in 1966. The existing main lines have since been electrified (to Bournemouth and Basingstoke in 1967, and to Portsmouth in the late 1980s). Most freight is now transported in containers. Southampton's container port is to the west of Millbrook and the original western docks. The railway tracks to the original docks have mainly now closed. Instead a project completing in 2021 has laid extra track to the Freightliner Marine Terminal in Redbridge enabling cargo trains up to 775m long to operate. It is hoped the extra capacity will increase the proportion of freight (currently 30%) leaving the port by train.

Further Reading

History of Southampton Docks
History of Railways in Southampton
Southampton Terminus Station
Associated British Ports (Southampton)
Southampton Water Dredging
History of the Port of Southampton
London and South Western Railway
Disused Station: Southampton Terminus
Southampton Rail Freight Project

Mail, Passenger, and Cruise Lines

Royal Mail Steam Packet Company

The Royal Mail Steam Packet Company (RMSPC) was incorporated by royal charter in 1839 and, a year later, contracted with the Admiralty to provide at least 14 ships sailing from Southampton or Falmouth carrying mail to Barbados. The London to Southampton railway opened in 1840. Because of the extra distance across unfavourable terrain, however, Falmouth was not connected to the railway network until 1863, so RMSPC delivered its Barbados mail from Southampton.

RMSPC also operated a range of other services such as Southampton to Argentina via Lisbon, Brazil and Uruguay from 1850 to 1980. When the Great Western Steamship Company failed in 1846, RMSPC bought SS Great Western, which by then had completed 45 transatlantic crossings, latterly between Liverpool and New York. Southampton became her new home port from where she made 14 voyages to the West Indies from 1847 to 1853, and another 9 to Rio de Janiero from 1853 to 1855. Following World War I, RMSPC faced financial difficulties and failed in 193. In 1931 their chairman was found guilty and jailed for mispresenting the state of the company to its shareholders. RMSPC was liquidated, various constituent companies were sold off, and its remaining operations continued by the newly formed Royal Mail Line (RML).

Note that the initials RMS in front of a ship's name indicate that it has been contracted by Royal Mail to carry their mail. These initials are therefore not limited to ships of the RMSPC or RML, but were also common for ships operated by Cunard, P&O, Union-Castle, and White Star, which also had official mail contracts. These days, this acronym is rarely used, although Cunard have retained it for the full name of their flagship, the RMS Queen Mary 2.

Cunard

In 1839, Samuel Cunard was awarded the first transatlantic royal mail contract and, a year later, formed the British and North American Royal Mail Steam Packet Company with two Scottish partners. They operated record breaking ships on the Liverpool-Halifax-Boston route, reducing the westward crossing time from 10 to 8 days by 1863. The company was renamed Cunard in 1879. The Lusitania recaptured the Blue Riband in 1907 and then Mauretania established a record in 1909 which stood for 20 years, crossing in under 4 and a half days at an average speed of 26 knots.

In 1919 Cunard moved their home port from Liverpool to Southampton and had offices in Maritime Chambers and, later, Southwestern House. In 1934 government loans allowed Cunard to progress with new flagships, the Queen Mary and Queen Elizabeth. Cunard were also required to merge with White Star, and were known as the Cunard-White Star line from then until 1949. The government-funded Queens were known as ships of state, and could be called on during wartime. Both were used to transport troops during World War 2, and could carry over 15,000 in a single voyage. Their speed helped to protect them from U boats. In all, Queen Elizabeth carried over 750,000 troops, travelling around 500,000 miles. At the end of this service, Queen Mary made a record return crossing to Southampton, taking under 4 days with an average speed of 32 knots.

After the war the two Queens reverted to commercial use, providing a two-ship weekly transatlantic express passenger service, generating significant profit. By the 1960s, however, jet travel was well established, and Cunard was operating at a loss. The Queens were sold off and replaced by the Queen Elizabeth 2 (QE2). From 1969 until 2008 the QE2 was operated as both a transatlantic ocean liner and also a cruise ship. Cunard was acquired by Carnival Corporation in 1998. In 2004, Queen Elizabeth 2 launched the Queen Mary 2 (QM2) in Southampton, the largest

passenger ship in the world at that time. She was designed by Stephen Payne, a graduate of the University of Southampton, for service as both an ocean liner and a cruise ship.

Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company

In 1835, Arthur Andersen and two partners started a regular steamer service between London, Spain and Portugal. In 1837 they were awarded a contract from the Admiralty to deliver mail to the Iberian Peninsular, and then in 1840 to Alexandria. The Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company (P&O) was incorporated by royal charter in 1840. In 1842, the P&O steamer Hindostan left Southampton to open the India Mail Service. By 1850 P&O had 30 steamers operating from the port, "*all splendidly built and fitted up*".

In 1843 P&O's first advertisement appeared in the Times inviting passengers to "*steam to Constantinople, calling at Gibraltar, Malta, Athens, Syria, Smyrna, Mytilene and the Dardanelles*" on "a round voyage aboard the 782 ton paddle steamship Tagus". The famous author Thackeray cruised the Mediterranean in 1844 and later published his "*Notes on a Journey from Corn Hill to Grand Cairo*".

In 1852 the Chusan was the first mail steamer to arrive in Australia, after a journey of 84 days via the Cape. The opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 led to increased competition for destinations such as India, South East Asia, China, and Australia. P&O responded by focussing on speed and efficiency, increasing capacity for freight and passengers. They built 29 new ships in the 1880s, using steel for the first time.

In 1900, watercolour sketches by the artist Wylie were used to illustrate pleasure cruises to Norway, Spitsbergen, the Baltic and the Northern Capitals. Another advertisement promotes the SS Salsette, a 6000 ton, 10,000 horse power steamer, travelling from London to Amsterdam, Christiana (Oslo), Copenhagen, Stockholm, Kronstadt (St Petersburg), Helsingfors (Helsinki) and Kiel. P&O also advertised a 1905 Easter Cruise to Portugal, Spain and Tangier, a 1909 Winter Cruise to India, Ceylon (Sri Lanka) and Egypt, and a 1913 Round the World Tour calling at Egypt, India, China, Japan, and Australasia.

In 1914, P&O took over the British India line, then in 1918 the Orient line. In the 1920s, their fleet reached a peak of nearly 500 ships. After India gained independence in 1947, this market declined, but numbers to Australia were increased by subsidised immigrants known as "ten pound poms". By 1968, when this scheme ended, over 1 million had arrived, mostly on P&O ships such as the Oriana and Canberra. In 1969, P&O was a founding partner in Overseas Containers Ltd, which it bought out and renamed P&O Containers Limited in 1986. P&O also operated ferries and ports among a range of business interests.

P&O ships have transported troops, during the Boer War, both World Wars, and most recently during the Falklands War in 1982, when the SS Canberra was converted to serve as a troopship and the educational cruise ship Uganda to serve as a military hospital ship.

In 1974, P&O bought Princess Cruises, and in 1977 separated its cruising operations to form P&O Cruises. In 1988 P&O Cruises acquired Sitmar Cruises and, in 1999, AIDA Cruises. P&O Princess Cruises was created became part of Carnival Corporation in 2003, and was renamed Carnival Plc. In 2009 the Carnival House headquarters opened in Southampton, and is the head office of P&O Cruises, and the Cunard Line, as well as the UK office of Princess Cruises, Seabourn, and the Holland America Line.

The Union Steam Ship Company / Union-Castle Line

The Union Steam Ship Company was founded in 1853 to bring coal from South Wales to Southampton for P & O. Following the failure of the South African Line, they were awarded a government contract to provide mail services between Southampton and South Africa. These services started in 1857 and continued to do so until 1977, having merged with a competitor to form the Union-Castle line in 1900. By 1965 the time to reach South Africa had been reduced to 11 days. Mailships left Southampton at 1pm every Friday. The last mail run from Southampton to South Africa was made by the Southampton Castle, calling at the Ascension Islands and St Helena en route, then Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, East London, and Durban.

The White Star Line

The White Star Line was founded in Liverpool in 1845, focussing on the route to Australia, but failed in 1867. The company name and flag were bought by an entrepreneur who formed an alliance with the Harland and Wolf shipyards and built new ships for the Liverpool to New York route. In 1873 their Baltic liner made an eastbound crossing at a record breaking average speed of 15.09 knots. White Star moved their express service from Liverpool to Southampton in 1907, including a stopover in Cherbourg to take on continental passengers, who previously might have travelled with Hamburg America or North German Lloyd. In 1912, the RMS Titanic made her fateful maiden voyage on this route. White Star suffered financial difficulties after World War I and was bought in 1927 by RMSPC but regained independence when RMSPC collapsed. Finally in 1934 they were forced to merge with Cunard to form the Cunard-White Star line. In 1950 the company name reverted to Cunard, although Cunard liners are still advertised as providing White Star service.

Some Ships Associated with Southampton

Tagus, Greenock, 1837, 55.5m, 9.5 knots, wooden paddle-wheel steamship
Great Western, Bristol, 1838, 71.6m, 8.5 knots, wooden paddle-wheel steamship
Hindostan, Northam, 1869, 107m, 14.5 knots, coal-powered steamship, iron hull, propeller
Syria, Northam, 1863/70, 95m, 10 knots, coal-powered steamship, iron hull, propeller (from 1870)
Durban, Sunderland, 1877, 110m, 12 knots, coal-powered steamship, iron hull, propeller
Titanic, Belfast, 1912, 269m, 23 knots, coal-powered steamship, steel hull, propeller
Queen Mary, Clydebank, 1934, 310m, 32.8 knots, oil-powered steamship, steel hull, propeller
QE2, Clydebank, 1967, 294m, 34 knots, diesel electric (from 1987), steel hull, propeller
Queen Mary 2, Saint-Nazaire, 2003, 345m, 30 knots, diesel electric, steel hull, propeller

Cruising From Southampton

Many people visit Southampton nowadays because they are cruising from or to the port. The days of ocean liners came to an end by the 1960s, when it was quicker and cheaper to fly across the Atlantic. To survive, companies such as Cunard and P&O needed a new business model. Starting in 1964, Townsend Thorensen operated roll-on roll-off ferry services to the continent, transporting passengers and their cars. In 1966 Klosters briefly ran a cruiseferry to Vigo, Lisbon and Gibraltar. A year later, P&O and a French partner introduced their own ferry service to France. From 1967 to 1977 Swedish Lloyd offered crossings to Bilbao in Spain. Other routes included Tangier, Algericas, San Sebastian, and Santander. These operated from the Eastern Docks. Cheap flights to the continent, together with the opening of the Channel Tunnel in 1994, led to further consolidation. By 1984 Southampton ferry services had all ceased, or moved to Portsmouth.

Klosters continued as the Norwegian Cruise Line. One of its co-founders left to set up the Carnival Cruise Line in 1972. These companies, together with the Royal Caribbean Cruise Line

(1968), demonstrated the commercial viability of Caribbean cruises. In 1965, Princess Cruise Lines started offering cruises from Los Angeles to the Mexican Riviera, and were bought by P&O in 1974. From 1977 the TV programme The Love Boat, featured the Island Princess and the Pacific Princess. As cruising became more popular, cruise lines introduced larger and larger ships, which are more efficient to operate. Wikipedia currently lists over 60 cruise ships ranging 300 to 360 metres in length, all built after the year 2000. The largest of these can accommodate over 6,000 passengers. There are another 20 such ships on order. Southampton is the most popular cruise port in the UK, with departures scheduled in 2024 by cruise lines including Azamara, Celebrity, Cunard, Disney, Explora, Fred Olsen, Holland America, MSC, NCL, Oceania, P&O, Princess, Regent Seven Seas, Royal Caribbean, and Silversea. Several of these operate smaller ships, with just hundreds rather than thousands of passengers. Popular destinations include New York, New England, Canada, Greenland and Iceland, Norway, the Baltic, Hamburg and Amsterdam, Bruges and Le Havre, round Britain and Ireland, France, Spain, the Mediterranean, the Canary Islands, and the Caribbean. Each January, brave passengers still set off on the world cruises lasting around 3 months. Your first cruise is more likely to be one week, or a taster cruise lasting just 2 or 3 nights.

The port authority maintains a schedule of cruise ships due to arrive in port, and where they will moor. They also provide maps and directions to each of the five cruise terminals:

QEII Cruise Terminal: berth 38, or 38/39, eastern docks, dock gate 4
Ocean Cruise Terminal: berth 46, eastern docks, dock gate 4
City Cruise Terminal: berth 101, western docks, dock gate 8
Horizon Cruise Terminal: berth 102, western docks, dock gate 10
Mayflower Cruise Terminal: berth 106, western docks, dock gate 20

Further Reading

Peninsular & Oriental Line	P&O	P&O Advertising
Port of Southampton	Largest Cruise Ships	Cruising from Southampton
Ship Movements	Union Steamship Co	Cunard History
Titanic Crew	Titanica	Cunard Company
Royal Mail Steamship Co	White Star Line	Union-Castle Line

Local Industry from 1700

With fewer opportunities for prospering via trade, it was still possible to get rich, and things started to look up for local industry in the 1700s. This section gives some examples of successful local businesses, most of which have some connection with shipping.

Walter Taylor, the third in his family with this name, was born in Southampton in 1734. Walter was apprenticed to Mr Messer who made wooden blocks for ship's rigging at his workshop in Westgate Street. Walter's father was a master ship's carpenter and had first hand experience of the problems caused by handmade blocks. When Messer died in 1754, Walter and his father acquired the business and developed sawing, boring, and turning machinery to mass-produce blocks conforming to a consistent specification. Walter is also credited with inventing the circular saw. Their business was so successful they expanded into neighbouring premises in Bugle Street.

In 1761 they supplied a specimen set of blocks to the Navy's Board of Ordnance who were so impressed that the Navy bought his entire stock. After his father died in 1762, Walter continued the business. His rigging blocks of half the usual size were found to be reliable, cheaper, and lighter. After a fire at the Navy dockyard in Portsmouth destroyed most of their stocks in 1770, Taylor was asked to replace all of these with the small, lighter blocks. At this time, Taylor moved his factory to Mayfield Park in Weston, and then in 1781 to Woodmill. During the late 1700s, Taylor supplied the Navy with around 100,000 blocks per year. By 1800 Walter was rich enough to buy an estate and build Portswood Lodge. In 1801, however, Marc Brunel (father of the famous Isambard Brunel) took out a patent for an improved block manufacturing process. Brunel offered first refusal on this to Walter Taylor and his son Samuel, but they refused. The Navy however decided to install Brunel's machinery in the Royal Dockyard and by 1803, once this was working reliably, the Navy cancelled Taylor's contract.

Richard Taunton inherited a family malt-making business in 1722, and branched out into importing wine from Spain and Portugal. In 1744, during the War of the Austrian Succession, he became part-owner of three privateers, which then captured three enemy vessels with cargo including 45 wagonloads of silver. This wealth allowed him to support local charities and, when he died, to leave in his will funds for Taunton's School, subsequently founded in 1760.

A sugar house was built starting in 1740 on the site of the Friary chapel, along what became known as Sugar House Lane. Its owner, John Brissault, was declared bankrupt in 1774. The building was later used as a granary, hospital, and store, before being destroyed by bombing in World War II.

A steam mill was built in 1781 at American Wharf on the River Itchen to provide biscuits for the Royal Navy during the American War of Independence. It was the third such mill to be built in the country, and the only one from this early period which as survived. The mill was extended during the Napoleonic wars in the early 1800s. There were 10 ovens each being used 16 times per day. The grade II listed building is being converted to offices and flats.

Ships required on-going maintenance, and still do. Sailing ships regularly require new sails and ropes. Evidence of local rope manufacturer can be seen the two Rope Walks shown on Milne's 1791 map. Three more have been identified locally, located in the Inner Avenue, St Mary's and Bargate areas. Joseph Clark, a rope manufacturer from St Mary's wrote in 1864 "*that rope-making should be a staple trade in Southampton is quite in the nature of things, for that part of a ship's fittings of most importance is, of course, the rigging or cordage*". His rope-walk was nearly 1,200

feet (365 metres) long and he describes the processes involved, of which the first "*consists in twisting the hemp into thick threads, called Rope-Yarns*".

Foundry Lane in Fremantle is named for an Iron Foundry set up some time before 1809 when it is first mentioned. By 1819 it was acquired by brothers C & H Tickell, who were responsible for the Gas Column sited in Houndwell Park. They also produced swing bridges for the Chichester Ship Canal, one of which can still be seen near the canal basin.

King, Witt & Co had a store at the bottom end of the High Street near Gloucester Square. This store contained a large variety of goods such as sheet and pipe lead, turpentine, oil, paint, brushes, and about 190 lbs of gunpowder, just under the maximum allowable. On 7th November 1837 a fire began about 11pm in the hay loft above their stable. A crowd assembled and helped to remove important documents, the gunpowder, and most of the turpentine. Unfortunately, after an hour the fire reached the remaining turpentine and there were three large explosions. Fifteen people died immediately followed by later by another seven who did not recover from their wounds. There is a memorial tablet in Holyrood Church to these 22 victims. The fire brigade were sadly ineffective: they had an hour to control the fire but the three fire engines which arrived were in poor condition, lacked hooks to bring down the roof, and the water pressure was inadequate.

James Wolfe (or Wolff) was born in 1797 and set up a foundry in East Street. His cannons were endorsed by the Royal Yacht Club in the 1830s and he gained commissions to produce brass cannons for several yachts. This led to a commission by the East India Company in 1840 to fit out four gunships. The Mexican government then ordered twenty cannon which they planned to install in one of their fortresses. The cannon were ready for delivery in 1842 and loaded onto the brig Tartar, moored off Chapel Wharf. Unfortunately, before it could set sail, the boat caught fire and was abandoned by its crew. It was decided to scuttle the ship but then there was an explosion, perhaps a shell, followed by several rockets. The sailors and dock workers quickly deserted the area in fear of their lives. Others, however, rushed down town to view the spectacle. Apparently, "*the assemblage of spectators was immense – the Marsh, Bridge Road, the walls of the Railway Terminus, the shores of Itchen Beach, Platform, Quay, Pier, vessels in the harbour, the towers of St Michael's and Holy Rhood, and every spot from which a view could be obtained being crowded*." The Art Gallery has a painting depicting this remarkable event.

The first commercially successful underwater telegraph cable linked London and Paris in 1851, enabling telegram messages to be sent within seconds. By 1866 Europe and America were connected by a transatlantic cable and in 1902 a similar service was provided across the Pacific by a cable linking Canada to Australia via Fiji. By 1902, however, Marconi had demonstrated wireless transmission of telegraph messages over the Atlantic. In 1912 the radio operators on the Titanic, employed by Marconi, sent an SOS signal to the Carpathia, which then rescued 705 survivors.

Southampton was involved in the submarine cable industry from 1914 when Pirelli built their Cable Works between Western Esplanade and the River Test. Problems with subsidence led Pirelli to open a new factory in Eastleigh in 1928, transferring operations away from Southampton. The Southampton factory closed in 1990. It was demolished and the WestQuay mall built on the site.

Innovations and improvements in both wireless and submarine cables continued throughout the 20th century. Eric (born Erich) Zepler was head of radio receiver operations for Telefunken but left Germany in 1935 to avoid Nazi persecution, and joined the Marconi Company

in England. His 1943 textbook *The Technique of Radio Design* was recognised as a classic. He founded the University of Southampton's Department of Electronics, Telecommunications and Radio Engineering in 1947.

In 1954 Standard Telephones and Cables (STC) built a factory in the docks to manufacture lightweight co-axial telephone cables. Both STC and Submarine Cables Ltd (SCL) were involved in transatlantic cables such as TAT-1, and CANTAT-2, together with the African cable system SEACOM. This second global network enabled telephone calls to be made between continents. Southampton's deep water port provided an advantage over its competitors based on the Thames. To lay underwater cables specialist ships are used with on-board cable laying machinery, pulleys to carry the cable directly from the factory to the ship, and ploughs capable of burying cables up to 3 metres into the seabed at depths of up to 1000 meters underwater.

Southampton University's Department of Electronics also conducted research into laser transmission of information through fibre optic cables. These cables can be manufactured with very low attenuation, so that signals can be sent over long distances without needing to be re-generated or amplified. Nonetheless, amplification is required for transmission across oceans. In 1986 researchers at the University demonstrated an optical amplifier using a fibre doped with a rare earth metal called Erbium. This amplifier is simpler, cheaper, and more reliable than the electrical repeaters incorporated into the underwater telephone networks being constructed at that time. This invention led the industry to move away from using electric underwater cables to fibre optic ones. The first transatlantic optically amplified systems were TAT-12 and TAT-13, which began operations in 1996. This third global network has enabled web and video connections to be made freely around the world. Although STC's Southampton factory closed in 1996, and manufacturing moved abroad, research and development continues locally, for example at Fibercore, set up in 1982 by members of the University's Optical Fibre Group.

The Pirelli Cable Works site now houses Westquay Shopping Mall. This mall was built in 3 phases starting with retail sheds to the west across Harbour Parade, and next the main shopping mall, which opened in 2000, running from Marks & Spencer to John Lewis and extending east as far as the High Street, and finally Westquay South with restaurants, cinema and bowling alley. The department stores previously located around Guildhall Square have been replaced by offices, a University teaching block, flats, an art gallery and studio theare.

Strictly speaking, West Quay refers to the waterfront to the west of the old town, which is further south. On the 1870 map of Southampton, this stretch of the water is shown as the West Bay. It might be more historically accurate, therefore, to call the mall West Bay rather than Westquay. Even after this stretch of waterfront was lost, public swimming continued west of the walls until 1977 at the open air Lido (near the present geothermal energy scheme) and, since 1999, the Quays complex. The Holiday Inn, Leonardo, Moxy and Premier Inn hotels are nearby.

After the astonishing expansion during the 1800s from 10,000 to 100,000, Southampton's population has continued to grow. In 1950 this was around 185,000, by 2000 it was 220,000 and currently it is around a quarter of a million. Housing spreads in all directions out to the boundaries of the city which are up to four miles from the Bargate. With the city's growth constrained by the M27, however, more high rise buildings will be needed to accommodate future increases.

It has been claimed that in the mid 20th century the majority of jobs in Southampton were associated with shipping and the docks. In the docks strike of 1969 there were around 2000

registered dock workers. When the container port opened in 1968, however, it changed the nature of dock work, with gangs of 16 or 20 dockers now replaced by a single crane operator.

By the end of the 20th century, moreover, many of the factories set up in the early 1900s to benefit from access to the docks had closed. These include Vosper Thornycroft (1904 – 2003), Pirelli (1914 – 1990), BAT Millbrook (1926 – 2006), Ford (1953 – 2013), STC (1956 – 1996), and Mullard (1957 – 2010). Although BAT and Mullard's successor NXP Semiconductors continue to employ some staff locally, around 3,000 manufacturing jobs have also been lost.

The city's largest employers currently are therefore the National Health Service (13,000 staff), University of Southampton (6,000 staff), and City Council (3,000 staff). Local workers are no longer primarily involved in transport, communications, or manufacturing, but instead have service roles.

Following the completion of Moresby Tower and the Harbour Hotel the Ocean Village site is now fully occupied. Within 150 years, the marshlands which were reclaimed and developed as Southampton's original eastern docks have now been re-occupied by a marina, offices, and housing. Waterfront development continues on the old TVS studios by Northam Bridge and the Vosper Thornycroft site across the Itchen in Woolston, Centenary Quay, where a 27 floor tower block has been completed, currently the city's tallest.

As the city's two Universities have around 30,000 students, there are over 35 halls of residence, including several in the city centre. Many of the 2 million cruise passengers passing through Southampton each year stay overnight, boosting numbers for the city's 30 or so hotels, most of which are centrally located. These hotels and the city centre restaurants also benefit from the Southampton International Boat Show and the more commercially oriented Seawork event held each year on Mayflower Park.

Further Reading

Walter Taylor III	More about Walter Taylor	Richard Taunton
Sugar House	More about the Sugar House	Sugar House Lane
Chapel Steam Mill	Rope Walks in Southampton	Tickell Foundry
The Great Fire of 1837	JJ Wolfe and Tartar Fire	Painting of Tartar
Titanic Wireless Operator	Pirelli Cable Works	Nine Pirelli Facts
Eric Zepler	Laying the CANTAT 2 Cable	Cable Ship Alert
Erbium Doped Fibre Amplifier	Fibercore	Westquay
Ford Factory Closure	NXP Southampton	BAT Southampton
NHS Southampton	University of Southampton	City Council

Aviation

Edwin Moon was an earlier pioneer of flying. Moon had worked in his father's finance company but set up Moonbeam Engineering in the Wool House at the bottom of Bugle Street in Southampton. This produced motor yachts, propellers, and marine engines. Edwin was inspired to build his own plane by the successful flights of the Wright brothers and Bleriot. He flew his first prototypes in 1910, with Moonbeam II taking off from North Stoneham Farm, an area which later became part of Southampton Airport. He went on qualify as an aviator in 1914, flew for the Royal Naval Air Service in World War I, then was squadron leader for the newly formed Royal Air Force, a test pilot and instructor.

It was inevitable that other boating firms would see opportunities creating by the new flying machines. Sam Saunders set up a works in 1901 on the Isle of Wight to exploit his invention of a lightweight mahogany material for boat hulls, but also manufactured fuselages for sea-planes. In 1929 new shareholders renamed the company Saunders and Roe and started the production of London flying boats. The company also manufactured Supermarine Walrus and Sea Otters during World War II.

In 1913, Bert Hinkler came to England from Australia to work for the Sopwith Aviation Company. He then served in the Royal Navy Air Service in World War I, and went on to join A. V. Roe in Southampton. In 1928 he was the first person to fly solo from England to Australia. Hinkler Road and the Hinkler pub in Thornhill are named after him.

The Supermarine aviation company was founded in 1913 by Noel Pemberton Billing on a disused coal yard in Woolston originally purchased for constructing motor launches. They adopted the name Supermarine in 1916 (in contrast with submarine). In 1917 R J Mitchell joined the company and became its chief designer in 1919. Over the next twenty years Supermarine designed and constructed commercial and military flying boats, a series of seaplanes that broke world speed records, and won the prestigious Schneider Trophy outright by winning three times in a row in 1927, 1929 and 1931. These innovations led to the Spitfire fighter which was developed between 1931 and 1936, when the Air Ministry ordered 310 planes and subsequently the Spitfire played a significant role in the Battle of Britain during 1940. The Supermarine factory was, however, bombed in September 1940 with the loss of more than a hundred lives. Fortunately Spitfire manufacture was dispersed around the country in so-called shadow factories. Design continued on the Hursley Park estate outside Winchester, for example, and 15 thousand Spitfire rear portions out of 22 thousand were made by Folland Aircraft in Hamble.

After World War II some aviation design and manufacturing continued locally, but outside Southampton itself. For example, Folland was responsible for the Midge and Gnat planes, used by the first Red Arrow team.

Calshot flying station was established in 1913 by the Royal Flying Corps. Over the next fifty years it was used for testing, training, and maintenance of seaplanes and flying boats. Calshot hosted the Scheider Trophy competitions in 1929 and 1931. The original hangars now house the Calshot Activities Centre.

During World War I Eastleigh Airfield was a base for the US Navy Air Services, with up to 4000 Americans billeted there or nearby along the railway line. After this the site became a transit camp for refugees waiting to take a boat to the USA or Canada. The Atlantic Park Hostel Company was a joint venture of Cunard, the White Star Line, and the Canadian Pacific Railway. In 1928

around 20,000 refugees passed through Atlantic Park. By 1932, however, numbers had fallen, and the site became Southampton Municipal Airport. Supermarine opened a test facility and built a new flight shed, while Cunliffe-Owen opened an aircraft factory to the south in Wide Lane. This factory was taken over by Ford in 1953. Ford Transits were manufactured in Southampton from 1972 until the factory closed in 2013; by 2005 over five million had been produced.

In Hamble A V Roe bought land to the south of Hamble Lane for a factory and an airfield to test his planes. A new, larger, airfield was bought in 1926, on the other side of the road, and the original airfield became an oil complex owned by Shell and BP. As well as AVRO, Fairey Aviation, Simmonds Aircraft, and Vickers/Supermarine also used the new north airfield. During World War 2, this airfield and associated hangars were mainly used for aircraft repair, adaptation and training. It finally closed in 1986.

Vickers Supermarine had a manufacturing site in Hythe from 1927 to 1936. This was later used for flying boat maintenance.

The plane company Airspeed Limited moved from York to a site at the newly constructed Portsmouth Airport in 1933. Their manager, Nevil Shute, was also a famous author. In 1940 they became a subsidiary of de Haviland. During World War 2 the airport was used for manufacture and repair. Airspeed built transport aircraft and military gliders. They were closed down in 1951, however, and the last flight left the airport in 1973.

As well as manufacture, Southampton was involved in a number of early air traffic services, with initial trials during 1919. Flights left from the Royal Pier in Southampton to Bournemouth, Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight. A service from Southampton to Le Havre also operated that year. Seaplane flights from Woolston to Cherbourg started in 1923, Woolston to Guernsey in 1924, and Portsmouth to Jersey in 1930. In 1937 airfreight and airmail services opened up to the newly constructed Jersey airport from Exeter, London, and Southampton.

Supermarine and LSWR helped to set up Imperial Airways in 1924. This later became British Overseas Airways Corporation (BOAC) and then British Airways (BA). In 1936 Imperial Airways started to run services using flying boats from Southampton docks to Egypt, eventually reaching as far as South Africa, Asia and Australia, first for mail but then also passengers. It took 10 days to reach Sydney however, as indicated in the table below, with flights leaving Southampton every Tuesday, Friday and Saturday.

Arrive	*When*	*Hotel to Stay At*	*Leave*	
Southampton	21:50	South Western	05:00	The train left from Victoria Station at 8pm to Southampton Terminus Station.
Athens	19:50	Grande Bretagne	04:30	
Basra	19:20	Shatt Al Arab	05:00	
Karachi	18:50	Carlton	05:00	
Calcutta	16:50	Great Eastern	05:30	
Bangkok	15:30	Oriental	05:30	
Singapore	13:15	Raffles	08:00	
Sourabaya	16:05	Oranje	05:30	
Darwin	18:10	Rest House	06:00	
Townville	16:20	Queen's	06:30	
Sydney	16:15			

As well as flying west, you could head east. In 1939, Pan American charged $760 for a return flight from New York to Southampton. Commercial services stopped during World War 2, however. During the war, existing airports were repurposed as air defence stations. The Lee-on-Solent airfield became HMS Daedalus. Four hundred and thirty five planes flew from HMS Daedalus to support the D-Day landings, the highest number of any UK airfield. The airport at Southampton became Royal Naval Air Station Eastleigh, a training base also known as HMS Raven. This was bombed 10 times by the Luftwaffe. A dozen or so new airfields and landing grounds were built in the New Forest, including at Beaulieu and Holmsley.

After the war, the newly created British European Airways began flights from Jersey to Southampton Airport. Imperial Airways also planned to resume flying boat services from Southampton. A purpose built terminal opened in London Victoria. This impressive building housed the company's headquarters. Passengers could buy tickets and check-in here. A 90 minute train ride took them to another new facility at Berth 50 in Southampton Docks for boarding. Saunders-Roe designed a new flying boat, the Princess, targeted at luxurious transatlantic travel. By 1950, however, Imperial's successor BOAC had opted for land-based routes instead.

Aquila Airways was founded in 1948, providing air-freight services using surplus RAF flying boats. They acquired extra flying boats from Calshot to support the Berlin airlift in 1948/9, landing on the river Havel. In 1949, Aquila began scheduled services from Southampton to Lisbon and Madeira. They took over the flying boat terminal at Berth 50. They also operated charter flights to places as far away as Aden and Helsinki, and introduced scheduled services to the Canary Islands and to Jersey, landing in St Aubin's Bay. During the 1956 Suez crisis, Aquila evacuated civilians from Great Bitter Lake in Egypt to Southampton. By this time, however land-based aircraft were increasingly popular, and operations ceased in 1958.

In the 1950s an air car-freight service was operated by Silver City Airways between Southampton Airport and Cherbourg using Bristol Superfreighter planes. In the 1960s, Southampton opened the first purpose-built Heliport in the UK. By 1973 there were 1688 take-offs and landings. Two years later, however, the heliport was no longer viable and closed.

In 1963 a concrete runway was constructed at Southampton Airport. The Atlantic Park Hostel Halt re-opened as Southampton Airport station in 1966, and has since been called Southampton Parkway, and Southampton Airport Parkway. A further boost to the airport came when the M27 airport roundabout opened in 1983, completing the route from Cadnam to Portsmouth. The M3 motorway also provided fast road connections with north Hampshire, Surrey and south London when it was completed in 1995. Flybe was a major regional airline between 2006, when they purchased BA Connect, and 2020, when they went bankrupt. Southampton was a major base for Flybe, who ran over 90% of passenger flights from the airport by 2020, which exceeded over 2 million passengers in 2017. The runway at Southampton was extended in 2023 to enable flights to more distant airports. Some international flights have resumed after the pandemic, although the most popular destinations are still local ones: Jersey and Guernsey. Some local historic planes can be seen at the aviation museum near Ocean Village in Southampton.

The first practical design for a hovercraft was developed by Sir Christopher Cockerell in the 1950s. The army and navy were not interested, however, but in 1958 Cockerell persuaded the National Research Development Corporation to fund a full-scale prototype. This became the SR.N1 (Saunders-Roe Nautical 1). The SR.N1 successfully crossed the English Channel in 1959. In 1960,

Cockerell moved to Hythe, and set up the Hovercraft Development Company. Hovercraft design was improved, with improvements to the "skirt" increasing the distance between the craft and the land or air it was flying over. By 1962 a number of companies were investing in manufacture, including Saunders-Roe (now part of Westlands), Folland and Britten-Norman. That year the Vickers-Armstrong VA3 was used to operate the first commercial service, taking up to 25 passengers 15 nautical miles from Moreton on the Wirral peninsular to Rhyl.

In 1966 the Saunders-Roe and Vickers hovercraft divisions merged to form the British Hovercraft Company (BHC). High fuel costs in the 1970s threatened hovercraft viability leading to further innovations, including the use of diesel engines, but further development ceased in the 1980s. In 1977 BHC created the largest Union Flag in the world, painted on their East Cowes hangar to celebrate Queen Elizabeth's silver jubilee.

The first cross-channel service was introduced by Seaspeed in 1968, using the Saunders-Roe / BHC SR.N4 to carry up to 30 cars and 254 passengers between Dover and Boulogne. Hoverlloyd also ran services from Ramsgate to Calais. After years of rivalry, and facing commercial challenges, these companies merged in 1981 to form Hoverspeed. The last cross-channel hovercraft service was withdrawn in 2000, however, following the opening of the Channel Tunnel.

Hovertravel's passenger ferry between Southsea and Ryde is the only hovercraft service left in the British Isles. They are now the world's oldest hovercraft operator. Their most recent craft (Solent Flyer and Island Flyer) were built by Griffon Hoverwork, a hovercraft manufacturer founded in 1976, now based in Portchester and Woolston. As well as commercial vessels, Griffon have a range of military and coastguard vessels, and offer training and maintenance services. Many historic models can be viewed at the popular Hovercraft museum in Lee on Solent.

Further Reading

Flying boat services	The Southampton flying boat	Supermarine
Supermarine at Hythe	Hamble Airfield	Calshot Airfield
RAF Calshot	Eastleigh Air Station	Airspeed Ltd
Portsmouth Airport	New Forest Airfields	Daedalus Airfield
Flying Boat Terminal	Imperial Airways	Jersey Routes
Imperial 1939 Timetable	Saunders-Roe Princess	Aquila Airways
Southampton Airport	Silver City Airways	Southampton Heliport
London Airways Terminal	Southampton Aviation Museum	
Hovercraft	VA3 Hovercraft Service	Wirral Wales Hovercraft
Seaspeed	Hoverspeed	British Hovercraft Corp.
Hovertravel	Griffon Hoverwork	Hovercraft Museum

Bridges of Southampton

Southampton has a river to the west and east, several railway lines, and the M27 running along its northern boundary. Bridges therefore enable and constrain journeys around the city.

Itchen

The first known bridge across the Itchen was at the aptly named Mansbridge. Until 1799 this was the only way for wheeled traffic to cross the river. Stoneham is located where this crossing meets the old road to Winchester and London through Swaythling. There is a stone bridge dating from around 1700, now used by pedestrians, and a modern bridge, dating from 1976, which takes the heavy traffic along the A27. The Itchen Way can be followed north from Mansbridge, but has been interrupted by the M27, and you must follow the path alongside the motorway to the east and then back again to the west. You can also walk from Mansbridge to the Itchen Valley Country Park across the water meadows north of the motorway, or a shorter distance to the White Swan inn.

In 1799 a wooden bridge across the Itchen was built at Northam, crossing to Bitterne Manor. The wooden bridge was replaced by an iron one in 1889. In 1929 Southampton took this over from the Northam Bridge Company, removing the need to pay a toll to cross. In 1954 a new concrete bridge was constructed.

In 1866 a new railway line between Southampton and Netley opened. The original Portswood railway station (1861) was moved south to the junction and renamed St Denys. In 1889 the line was extended to Fareham and beyond. The original rail bridge was replaced in 2010.

In 1883 the developers of Bitterne Park built Cobden Bridge to connect Bitterne Park Triangle to St Denys. The bridge was toll free, which was popular. Trams were able to cross the river here, unlike at Northam. The original bridge was replaced by a stone bridge which opened in 1928.

Ferry boats operated from Crosshouse Road in Chapel to the village of Itchen Ferry probably since medieval times. The Cross House which provides shelter to travellers waiting to cross dates from this time. Itchen Ferry villagers were a tight knit community, skilled at sailing their ferry boats, fishing smacks, and yachts. Their village was heavily bombed during World War II and Itchen Ferry village has now been incorporated into Woolston.

Starting from 1836 a steam powered chain ferry, or floating bridge, began service, with approach roads on both sides of the river, and a toll house on the western bank in Floating Bridge Road. Initially there was just one ferry but a second one was introduced in 1881. In all there were 14 different ferry vessels over the years. Later ferries were diesel powered. The council acquired the Itchen Bridge Company in 1934 and, in 1946, discontinued tolls for pedestrians and cyclists. Finally, in 1977 a conventional toll bridge was opened. The last crossings of the floating bridge had 500 passengers whose special tickets entitled them to a glass of wine in a commemorative glass. The toll bridge has 80 feet of head space to allow larger ships to pass underneath. Toll booths are sited at the Woolston end, with the toll varying according to the time of day and vehicle size.

From 1967 to 1980 Seaspeed and Hovertravel operated hovercraft services ran from Southampton to Cowes, leaving just upriver of the floating bridge terminal. Though initially popular and profitable, there were subsequently replaced by hydrofoil and later catamaran services leaving from Town Quay. Catamarans continue to run as Red Funnel's passenger-only Red Jet service.

Test

The first known bridge across the Test was at the aptly named Redbridge. In Saxon times this was called Hreodford, suggesting there was a ford across the river rather than a bridge. The first syllable of these names derive from the many reeds which are found in the marshes of the Test. The oldest is a six arch bridge on the Southampton side, dating from the 1600s. A single arch bridge on the Totton side dates from 1793. These bridges no longer carry road traffic. The current road, known as the Redbridge Causeway, runs alongside these historic bridges, and was completed in 1930. Traffic toward Totton and the New Forest comes from the north via the M271 and from the east via the Millbrook Bypass (A33). There is also a third bridge crossing the test at Redbridge. This was constructed for the Southampton to Dorchester railway line, which opened in 1847. Nowadays the most popular destination is probably Bournemouth, with over 100 trains a day crossing over, so that the railway bridge is another vital transport link.

Upriver from these bridges there are two pedestrian routes across the marshes and water meadows, which form a nature reserve. You can carefully cross the Romsey railway line, then follow the River Test Boardwalk to reach Totton. You can also walk down the quiet Mill Lane to reach Nursling Mill, then follow the public footpath across the river to Testwood Lakes in north Totton. These walking routes are linked by a short section of the Test Way which follows part of the old canal from Southampton to Andover and Salisbury. Neither of these canals was a commercial success and little remains of either, although the footpath from Romsey to Stockbridge follows the route of the canal which was later re-used for the railway to Andover until this also closed in 1964. There are also a number of other paths through the Lower Test Valley nature reserve, which take you to points of interest and hides where you can watch local bird-life.

Other Bridges and Tunnels

The so-called Central Bridge, grade II listed, was built in 1882 over the railway tracks running down to Southampton Terminus station and the docks, giving access to the Floating Bridge without the need for level crossings. Nowadays only one railway track remains.

The Civic Centre hill was a significant barrier for the railway network in Southampton. A tunnel under the hill had been built for the Southampton and Salisbury canal, which further complicated matters. The railway tunnel partially collapsed in 1847, delaying full opening of the Dorchester line. Work in 2009/10 allowed full height freight trains to pass through and raised the speed limit.

It is likely you will pass over or under a motorway bridge if you leave Southampton by car. At the bottom of the M271 a flyover takes traffic over the busy roundabout, one of three M271 bridges. Not counting foot bridges, the M27 has around 14 bridges from the junction with the M271 to its crossing over the River Hamble at Bursledon. Only half of these are major roads, which means getting in or out of the city is slow if for any reason one of the motorways is closed. The A27 crosses the Hamble just south of the M27, but downstream there is no other bridge, only a small passenger ferry, which first ran in 1493. Road traffic heading east is therefore funnelled onto the M27 or A27.

Further Reading

Itchen Ferry Village Education Pack

Itchen Way

Southampton Tunnel

Lower Test Nature Reserve

Military Southampton

Southampton has thrived as a commercial centre, but has also served the nation in times of war. Soldiers camped on the Common during both World Wars. No sign remains of these camps, but there are still sights around the city associated with military campaigns and leaders. This article indicates their locations and the events they are linked with. Depending on your interests, you might like visit some of them while in Southampton.

Early History

The fortified settlement at Bitterne Manor was built and occupied by the Romans. It was likely also re-used as one of King Alfred's defensive burhs. King Olaf is said to have spent the winter of 994/5 AD in Woolston (Olaf's Town?) during Ethelred's reign when there was much conflict between this Anglo-Saxon king and the Vikings. Cnut's reign as King of England started after the Saxon Witan (council) accepted his claim to the throne in 1016. It is not known where the Witan met, but the busy Canute Road runs from Terminus Terrace to Ocean Village.

Norman and Medieval History

Southampton Castle was strengthened by Henry II following the civil war between Stephen and Matilda. Southampton was an important port for travel to and from Normandy, and elsewhere in France. The King's Vaults still remain, and probably date from the reign of Henry's son Richard I. Both Henry and Richard spent most of their time in France defending their extensive territories. Richard also took part in the third crusade. Unfortunately he was captured on his way back from this campaign. Gervase le Riche, a wealthy Southampton resident, helped to organise his ransom, and Richard is claimed to have stayed in Southampton Castle when he made it back to England.

At the start of the Hundred Years War, France organised a number of raids on important English ports. Unfortunately Southampton's town walls had been built to defend against attack from land, not sea. The raiders were able to sack the town, and take much valuable merchandise away. Following this the city was compelled to extend the walls to the west and south, fully enclosing the old town. The Arcades incorporate features from the merchant houses which were incorporated into these new walls. Gods House Tower was constructed and a town gunner employed to ensure that hostile ships would be spotted and warned off.

Shakespeare's play, Henry V, starts in London and moves to Southampton before sailing to France and the battle of Agincourt in 1415. The second scene of act two takes place in Southampton, following the discovery of a plot against the king. The conspirators were executed outside the Bargate. It has been claimed that their trial took place in the Red Lion pub. The Earl of Cambridge was buried in St Juliens Chapel. Henry then sailed for France. Historians at the University of Southampton have estimated that his fleet had around 700 ships, and carried some 8,500 soldiers. It is likely many of these passed through the West Gate before boarding. A burgess of Southampton, William Soper, was appointed Clerk of the King's ships and built the Holy Ghost in 1414 and the Grace Dieu, launched in 1418. The Grace Dieu was constructed at a special dock near Town Quay, an ambitious vessel, around twice the size of the later Mary Rose. She did not see active service, however, and was laid up in the River Hamble where she was rediscovered in 1933. It is suspected that the remains of the Holy Ghost are also still located nearby.

Stuart, Georgian, and Victorian History

Along with Southampton, Portsmouth was also involved in military campaigns against France. Henry VIII built 12 device forts around the Solent, including Southsea Castle. In 1545, he watched the Battle of the Solent from there. Although his flagship the Mary Rose sadly sank, but the French were nonetheless driven away.

Starting from 1650, the Royal Navy expanded its presence in Portsmouth. In the 1690s Edmund Dummer, Surveyor of the Navy, constructed a "great stone dock" there. Edmund was born in North Stoneham 1651 and his career with the navy began in 1668. His main achievements as Surveyor were the developments of the royal dockyards at Plymouth and Portsmouth. In 1705 his cousin Thomas helped him to purchase South Stoneham House. By 1708 this had been re-developed as a fine mansion, and still forms the core of the grade II* listed building today. Although the house is not open to the public, there is a good view of it from Wessex Lane.

Naval vessels were built in Southampton during periods of conflict. Anne Wyatt and her husband William, for example, produced a number of these at Bursledon and Redbridge in the 1690s. Hobbs and Hellyer built another 6 naval ships at Redbridge in the 1790s. Though their shipyards no longer exist, the grade II listed Ship Inn in Redbridge dates from this period.

A highly successful business was operated by Walter Taylor III and his father. They were famous for the mass production of ships blocks for the Royal Navy, supplying 100,000 blocks a year between 1759 and 1803. They produced these at various locations around the city, starting near the Westgate, and ending at Woodmill, which is just down the road from South Stoneham House.

During the Napoleonic Wars the Wool House kept prisoners of war from France and Spain, some of whom carved their names on its beams. The so-called the Spanish Graveyard nearby suggests that some of them were buried here. A barracks was constructed at the top of London Road starting from 1794. After the war it was converted to house and school military orphans.

In 1841 the Ordnance Survey suffered a fire at their London offices and moved down to these barracks. They moved out to a new purpose built location in Maybush in 1969. Their original Southampton site, which is grade II listed, can be viewed from London Road, opposite Ordnance Road, next door to the Crown Court.

Henry Shrapnel, lieutenant-general, is famous for the fragmentation shell he invented. This new form of munition was used at the Battle of Waterloo. Shrapnel retired to Southampton in the 1830s, living briefly in Bugle Street before moving to Peartree House, where he died in 1842.

General Gordon's father retired to 5 Rockstone Place in the 1850s, and his sisters lived there until 1919. General Gordon stayed also there when on leave. He is named on the family tomb in the Old Cemetery, there is a General Gordon memorial in Queens Park, and the Southampton Gordon Boys' Brigade was founded in his memory.

The John I Thornycroft company was founded in 1866, making steam launches at Chiswick on the Thames. In the 1870s they started producing motor torpedo boats for a number of navies. As the size of these increased, the site on the Thames became unsuitable, and in 1904 Thornycroft bought the former Oswald Mordaunt yard in Woolston, and gradually moved production down, closing their Chiswick yard in 1909. Up to and during World War I they built 64 Royal Navy destroyers and three submarines. During World War II they built destroyer escorts, minelayers, and landing craft assault vessels. Sadly, in 2003 Vosper Thornycroft decided to close the yard at Woolston. This site has now been redeveloped for housing.

Modern History

Southampton was well established as a commercial port and gateway to the world when World War I broke out. It is not surprising, therefore, that in August 1914 Southampton was named Military Embarkation Port number 1. Troops could arrive by train services running directly to their ship. A number were also stationed on the Common. As well as soldiers, horses, guns and ammunition were shipped out. Around 7 million soldiers, 150,000 vehicles and 800,000 horses passed through the port. A plaque on Admiralty House next to Dock Gate 4 remembers the "Old Contemptibles", as members of the British Expeditionary Force were nicknamed.

Swaythling hosted the "remount depot" which collected and trained horses to serve in the war. The depot is remembered by a statue and plaque on Swaythling station. Sadly, many of these animals did not return, but the much loved Warrior, injured during the advance on the Aisne, was rescued from the Swaythling Veterinary Field Hospital, and presented to the Southampton Borough Police. He served as a police horse until 1935 and is buried alongside the path downhill from the municipal golf course club house in Bassett.

Admiral Jellicoe was born and educated in Southampton. He joined the navy as a cadet in 1872 and rose through the ranks to command the grand fleet at the Battle of Jutland in 1916, a largely indecisive clash between the British and German dreadnought ships. His house at 1 Cranbury Place has a blue plaque in his honour.

The memorial at Hollybrook Cemetery lists the names of 1853 troops who lost their lives during World War I but could not be buried, for example sailors on ships which were sunk.

In 1937 nearly 4,000 Basque children fleeing the Spanish Civil War after the bombing of Guernica were transported from Bilbao on board the SS Havana to a refugee camp in Eastleigh.

The Supermarine Aviation Works based in Woolston was responsible for the design and manufacture of the early Spitfire fighter planes. Designer RJ Mitchell adopted an elliptical wing shape and used sunken rivets to reduce their cross-section, increase speed, and meet the requirements of the Air Ministry. The first prototype flew from Eastleigh Aerodrome (now Southampton Airport) in 1936. When Mitchell died in 1937, Joseph Smith took over the role of chief designer. The first production planes were completed in 1938. A "shadow factory" in Castle Bromwich, Birmingham, was also created to increase manufacturing capacity, and produced their first Mark II Spitfires in the summer of 1940. The Woolston factory was destroyed later that year, although by this time some of the production jigs and manufacturing tools had been dispersed to smaller sites around Southampton. Spitfire production was able to continue throughout the war thanks to these shadow factories. The Friends of St James Park have produced a walking trail connecting some of these sites in Shirley. Designers continued to improve the plane at Hursley House, Hursley Park, near Winchester. The last Spitfire was produced in 1948, by which time over 20,000 had been built. There is a memorial remembering the Spitfire and RJ Mitchell in Hazel Road, Woolston, and a plaque in the nearby Spitfire Court, on the site of the Supermarine works. You can view Spitfire F24 PK683 at the Solent Sky Aviation Museum near Ocean Village.

The Port of Southampton also played a major role in World War II. The British Expeditionary Force sailed from Southampton to Cherbourg in 1939. In 1940 around 330,000 of these soldiers returned to Britain thanks to Operation Dynamo and the Dunkirk Little Ships. Nine boats built at the Rampart yard in Vespasian Road were commandeered for war service. Lady Lou, a 40 foot Rampart motor yacht, took part in this operation.

Southampton was bombed heavily, particularly at the end of 1940. In Hoglands Park, along Houndwell Place, a memorial plaque on the site of one of Southampton's air raid shelters recalls this period, when 631 people were killed, around 2,000 injured, and 45,000 properties damaged or destroyed. The ruined Holyrood Church on the High Street has been preserved as a memorial.

As the war progressed, Southampton was transformed into a large-scale military camp. A Nissen hut "hutment" was constructed on the Common and hundreds of thousands of military personnel were stationed here during the war. Some civilians also sought refuge on the Common and spent the night there during bombing raids. After the war, the army huts were retained until the early 1950s to house people whose homes had been destroyed. One ARP (Air Raid Precautions) post remains in the bushes on the west side of the Common, north of the underpass.

Planning for D-Day began already in 1942. The South Western Hotel was used as the Combined Operations Military Movement Control headquarters, and the Polygon hotel was the headquarters of the 14th Major Port US Army in the lead-up to D-Day. The build-up of ships began in 1942, and 25 military camps were established nearby. Sections of the concrete Mulberry Harbours were constructed in the docks. On D-Day itself, two thirds of the British assault force left from Southampton. By the end of the war, over three and a half million military personnel had passed through the port. Some of the troops waiting to liberate Europe carved their names in a brick wall on Western Esplanade, opposite and a little up from Blue Anchor lane. Commemorative plaques can be found at the entrance to Town Quay, on Dock Gate 8, in the Civic Centre foyer, and alongside the entrance to the City Art Gallery. Many former prisoners of war were brought home via Southampton, and a plaque in Town Quay Park recalls the repatriation of men, women and children who survived captivity in the Far East and returned via the port of Southampton.

The grade I listed Cenotaph in Watts Park was designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens to commemorate those who lost their lives in World War I. Green glass panels around the Cenotaph now also list those who lost their lives in World War II.

There is a statue of Earl Mountbatten in Grosvenor Square. Mountbatten served in both world wars. In World War II he commanded the fifth destroyer flotilla, organised raids on St Nazaire and Dieppe, and oversaw the recapture of Burma and Singapore in 1945.

In the Falklands War, P&O's Canberra and Cunard's QE2 were converted to troop ships. A helicopter flight deck was added to the Canberra by Vosper Thornycroft in Woolston. Canberra transported 2,400 troops to the south Atlantic, and QE2 carried over 3,000. One of QE2's anchors was given to the city in 2011 and is installed on the pavement outside Holyrood Church.

Further Reading

Bitterne Manor Park
Richard I in Southampton Castle
Gods House Tower
William Soper
Woodmill
Spanish Burial Ground
Southampton in World War I
Supermariners
Southampton in World War I & II
Lady Lou
D-Day Wall
Southampton Castle
French Raid
Southampton Plot
Grace Dieu
South Stoneham House
Ordnance Survey
Admiral Jellicoe
Town Quay Park Memorials
Swaythling Remount Depot
World War II Air Raids
Falklands Troop Departure
King's Vaults
Arcades
Agincourt
Ship Inn
J I Thornycroft
Peartree House
Warrior
Hollybrook Memorial
Spitfire Trail
Cenotaph
Falklands Return

Civic Southampton

Over the centuries, Southampton has built up significant infrastructure and institutions. Residents are grateful for its parks, schools, hospitals, and local transport network. Visitors also benefit from its hotels, museums, Universities, and connections to the wider world. This article explains how these were founded and developed by wealthy residents and businesses, and government funding.

Norman and Medieval Period

England was a feudal state during this period. Ultimately everything was owned by the King or Queen who could grant lands to loyal followers in return for their services, taxes, or both. Records of taxation during this period include the Exchequer's Pipe Rolls, which start from 1130, and the Chancery Rolls, starting from 1199. Southampton's archives also have over 800 years of records, including brokerage books from 1430 to 1566, which provide details of local taxes.

As an important norman port, Southampton was expected to transport and host the royal family and their supporters to and from France, and keeping royal goods safely. The town was also responsible for maintaining and defending the castle, its royal quay, and the town walls.

Appearing first under Henry II, the town's taxes were lumped into a single payment called the fee farm. The amount payable could be negotiated in advance. To start with the fee farm was set at £300, the same as London, and twice that of Winchester, but was later reduced to £200 per year. The person responsible for this payment was known as the fee farmer. They could keep any surplus, but had to make good any deficit. Accounts show expenses they deducted such as paying the castle chaplain and watchman, transport of the king's treasure, transport for the king and queen, board and wine (for example £3 1s 1d in 1160) for the queen, transport of the king's cows and their keep, and cages for his hawks. The farm continued to be paid, more or less regularly, up until 1640 when it was reduced to £50 per year because of the fall in trade and port taxes by then.

The role of Portreeve was originally created by the anglo-saxons, but continued after the norman conquest, and was the official (reeve) who collected port taxes. In the late 1100s this title was held by Gervase Le Riche, who established Gods House Hospital. Some of this establishment survived because its ownership had passed to Queens College Oxford by the time Henry VIII dissolved the monasteries. The Franciscan Friary and St Denys Priory, however, disappeared. Gervase reports six passages of the royal galley (esnecca, or snake) when Richard I returned to England, at a cost of £45. At the start of the 1200s, however, the fee farm was purchased and administered by the Gild Merchant, a group of wealthy businessmen, rather than an individual.

A short lived tax instituted by King John in 1202 levied a payment of one fifteenth on all moveable goods. Southampton contributed £712 3s 7d, exceeded only by Boston (£780 15s 3d) and London (£836 12s 10d), suggesting that the town was the third most prosperous trading port in the country at that time. Trade in wool and wine was a major source of prosperity for the city up to the mid 1500s say. One of the medieval merchant's houses survives, managed by English Heritage; a Wool House, now a pub; the Weigh House; and Westgate Hall, now a wedding venue. Guided tours of the old town often feature a visit to one of the vaults used to store wine and wool.

In 1445 the town received a new charter, setting up a corporation to manage its affairs, with a mayor was elected annually by its burgesses (property owning residents) and a sheriff (shire reeve) to oversee justice. These days mayor and sheriff are largely ceremonial roles, but the sheriff continues to be responsible for the Court Leet, originally held outside on the Common but

nowadays in the Council Chamber. The corporation replaced earlier arrangements such as the Gild Merchant and port reeve. From then on, Southampton was governed by its corporation, which these days is called the city council. Southampton was part of Hampshire County Council from 1974 to 1997, when it regained independence and became a unitary authority.

The Franciscan Friary developed a system to supply water from Colewell Spring on Hill Lane to the friary. In 1311 they permitted all residents to use this system, and in 1420 passed the whole system over to the town. The conduit head still exists, and one water house in Commercial Road.

In 1550 the rector of St Mary's left money to establish a grammar school, which opened in Winkle Street in 1554. The school then moved to West Hall in Bugle Street in 1696, which is currently the site of the register office. It includes a chapel that was originally part of the school. Nowadays King Edward VI is a prestigious co-educational private school, located on Hill Lane.

Stuart, Georgian, and Victorian Period

After a decline in the late 1500s and 1600s, Southampton began to proper again from the 1700s. A canal or navigation was created alongside the River Itchen to ease the transport of goods such as coal, corn, chalk and salt to and from Winchester, opening in 1710. This reached a new sea lock at Woodmill, from where barges could travel the tidal river to reach new warehouses at Northam. The canal was relatively successful until the early 1800s, after which trade began to fall, particularly after 1840 when the London to Southampton railway opened, and it closed in 1869.

In preparation for the arrival of the stage coach, the mayor of Southampton planted trees along the Avenue in 1745. This remains the most impressive road into the city, replacing the old route via Swaything, Portswood, and Rockstone Lane. The spa era Star and Dolphin coaching inns still remain in the High Street. A number of grand late Georgian and early Victorian houses can also still be found in some of the streets outside the old town, for example Portland Street, Portland Terrace, Cumberland Place, Carlton Crescent, and Oxford Street.

A parliamentary commission investigated local government in the early 1830s, and discovered a number of abuses, for example in some cases *borough funds were "frequently expended in feasting, and in paying the salaries of unimportant officers" rather than on the good government*. The 1835 Municipal Reform Act created town councils and obliged them to publish accounts liable for audit. A third of the councillors were to be elected by ratepayers each year on a rolling basis. There was considerable appetite for political reform in Southampton and for local improvements. This can be seen in the records of various commissions established during this period, and held in the city archives: Waterworks (1748), Pavement and Improvement Commissioners (1770), Board of Guardians (1830), Southampton Health Board (1850), School Board (1850), Fire Brigade (1884) and Police Force (1902).

As the population grew during the 1800s, there was a shortage of burial space. In 1846 fifteen acres of the Common were converted for use as a cemetery, and in 1863 this was enlarged by a 5 further acres. The Friends of the Old Cemetery have placed blue pegs to mark memorials for victims of the Titanic.

The council was responsible for creating Western Esplanade in the 1890s to link the Royal Pier and central railway station (then called the West Station). This road has now been cut off by West Quay, and the lower half is once again a pleasant stroll, albeit no longer alongside water.

Workhouses were built to accommodate the poor and homeless of Southampton. The first one was set up in 1629 following a bequest of £200 by John Major. This was subsequently

relocated to St John's Hospital (which is now a school). A poor law body was incorporated in 1773 and a local Board of Guardians appointed. The workhouse in St John's Hospital was sold and a new one constructed on land north of St Mary's Church. This was deemed unsuitable and a new building put up on the same site in 1866. After World War II this was taken over by the council, and now is part of Southampton City College. Southampton General Hospital was originally opened in 1902 to care for infirm inmates of the workhouse. It expanded at the outbreak of World War I in 1914. In 1930 the council took responsibility and renamed it the Borough Hospital. In 1948 when the National Health Service was created it became Southampton General Hospital.

The Harbour Board was set up in 1803. It was responsible for construction of the Royal Pier and then oversaw the development of the docks by the Southampton dock company from 1838.

Charitable giving continued to be a significant source of improvements. The Royal South Hants Hospital was founded in 1838 and moved to its current site in 1844. Benefactors included the Bullar family, the Crabbe family and Reverend Fanshawe. Wealth from his wine business, and privateering, allowed Richard Taunton to leave Southampton Corporation a considerable sum of money. This was used to found Taunton's School in 1760, which continues today as the co-educational Taunton's Sixth Form College in Hill Lane. A hundred years later, another successful wine business enabled Henry Robinson Hartley to leave money to the town to set up the Hartley Institution on the High Street, opened by Lord Palmerston in 1862. In 1889 the Corporation gave a grant for the provision of technical education. In 1902 the institution became the Hartley University College and then, in 1952, the University of Southampton, which now has its main campus in Highfield. Sir Frederick Perkins was yet another a successful brewer, wine and spirit merchant. In 1863 he donated the avenue of lime trees which still exists today, running south through East Park through Palmerston Park to Houndwell Park. William Chamberlayne was chair of the local gas company and generously gave the town ornate iron columns for the new gas lights. He is commemorated by the blue and gold replica gas column, unveiled in 1822, which is currently located in Houndwell Park at the end of the lime tree avenue.

After the death of the heavily pregnant Elizabeth Briggs who died in 1850 after being turned away the workhouse it was recommended that Southampton's slums should be cleared, but this did not happen. A second tragedy followed in 1894 when Ellen Wren died in her own vomit after drinking gin, and lay undiscovered for several days. This finally triggered a response. The old town slums were demolished and replaced by new purpose built accommodation. Two municipal cottages built above the Undercroft on Bugle Street in 1905 still exist.

Modern Period

The London and South Western Railway purchased the docks in 1892 and then in 1923 became part of Southern Railway. West Bay was reclaimed to form the new Western Docks, which opened in 1934. As part of this development, Mayflower Park was given to Southampton to compensate for the loss of sea shore. The reclaimed land between Western Esplanade and the new docks was originally used for manufacturing, but is now mainly retail.

The Civic Centre, outdoor sports centre and municipal golf course were constructed during the 1930s. As well as the council offices, the Civic Centre houses the Central Library, Southampton Art Gallery, SeaCity Museum, and the Guildhall, an entertainment venue which can accommodate 1750 people. The Art Gallery benefited from a bequest by Richard Chipperfield, who had set up a successful local pharmacy business. Nathaniel St Andre's grandson George Pitt library donated his

library to Southampton in 1831. This formed the core of the original free town library established in St Mary Street in 1857, before it moved to London Road, and finally to the Civic Centre.

The Antelope Cricket Ground, north of Charlotte Place, was the home of Hampshire Cricket Club from 1863 to 1884 before they moved to a purpose built ground on Northlands Road. Since 2001 they have played at the Rose Bowl in West End. The Antelope ground was taken over by the St Mary's Football Club, now Southampton FC, until 1897 when they moved to a purpose built ground in the Dell on Archers Road. A new football stadium in St Mary's, near the disused gas works, opened in 2001. This has capacity for over 32,000 spectators, the largest in the south east.

In 1964 the College of Technology was built on East Park Terrace. After merging with the School of Art, and the School of Navigation, this became the Southampton College of Higher Education, then Southampton Institute of Higher Education, and in 2005 Solent University.

Following World War II, when around 5,000 buildings were destroyed and a further 11,000 damaged, a development plan was published in 1952. Building houses was a priority, and it was 1956 before Tyrrell and Green's new building opened in Above Bar Street. This store, now called John Lewis, moved to the new Westquay mall when it opened in 2000. Their postwar shop was demolished and has now been rebuilt as studio theatres and an art gallery with flats above.

In addition to the council and private enterprise, the current city has been shaped by social activism. In 1969 the council proposed building car parks on the Common next to the Cowherds. This was opposed by three local groups, the City of Southampton Society, the Friends of Old Southampton, and the Southampton Commons and Parks Protection Society. In the High Court, the judge found for the societies on the grounds that car parks would compromise the purpose of the Common as public open space, and the prohibition on roads on the Common.

In 1928 the Empire Theatre opened, one of six 2000 seater venues around the country, showcasing live shows and, later, movies. The theatre was taken over by the Gaumont Picture Corporation in 1942. The first live show after World War II, Annie Get Your Gun, brought thousands out to queue for a ticket. Starting in the 1960s rock and pop artists put on live shows, including the Beach Boys, the Beatles, and Queen. By the 1980s, however, the top names needed larger venues, although live theatre, including ballet, comedy, and opera remained popular. In 1982 the Gaumont's owners, Rank, applied for permission to convert the theatre to a bingo hall. A petition organised by local fans was signed by 93,000 keen to save the theatre. The city council, supported by Hampshire county council and the Arts council, were able to raise the funds needed to buy the Mayflower Theatre and refurbish it. It continues as a trust under public ownership.

Further Reading

Southampton Archives
Gods House Hospital
County Sheriff
Water Supply
The Avenue
Victorian Slums
Friends of the Old Cemetery
Lost Architecture
Tyrrell and Green
Mayflower Theatre
History of Southampton (Tax)
Gild Merchant
Southampton Council History
King Edward VI School
London Southampton Railway
Improvement Commissioners
Civic Centre
The Dell
Southampton in the 1950s
Portreeve
Vaults
Court Leet
Itchen Way
Dolphin Hotel
Western Esplanade
Mayflower Park
Southampton Workhouses
Solent University

Part V
Quiz Questions

Quiz Questions

This guide provides a lot of information about the past and present of South Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. To help you digest and remember more of these topics, it also includes 160 quiz questions which test your knowledge of the places you have visited and the pages you have read about the area. The quiz questions are multiple choice, with four possible answers. The answer pages indicate which response is correct and also provide a web link to a source with further information on the question topic, which should help to justify why this is the right answer.

You can use these quizzes for entertainment, for example by challenging teams of your family and friends to see how well they score. You can test their on-line search skills by allowing them to use the internet to search for answers. You can also browse the lists of questions on your own to find a question which intrigues or interests you, then follow the web link to read the background information and learn more about this topic. Finally, you can use the questions to improve your recall of key facts and dates that you wish to memorise.

The questions cover Isle of Wight, Portsmouth, Southampton, and the wider Solent Region. There is one set of twenty questions covering events associated with each of these four cities or regions, and another covering places. If any of the questions is poorly worded, or one of the answers is wrong, or the associated web link no longer works, please contact me so I can update the quiz.

Questions on Isle of Wight Events

1. Who inherited lordship of the island in 1262
   Baldwin de Redvers, Edmund Crouchback, Isabella de Fortibus, Simon de Montfort

2. When did French raiders set siege to Carisbrooke Castle
   1313, 1337, 1374, 1377

3. When was Charles I imprisoned in Carisbrooke Castle
   1647-8, 1649, 1649-50, 1666

4. Why did the "Chalybeate Spring" report of 1812 attract visitors to Niton Undercliff
   gold panning, increased libido, medicinal effects, warm spa bathing

5. When and where did the first seaside pleasure pier in the world open
   Ryde 1814, Sandown 1864, Ventnor 1833, Yarmouth 1812

6. When did Keats stay in Eglantine Cottage, Shanklin
   1789, 1812, 1815, 1819

7. When was the first edition of Brannon's Vectis Scenery published
   1812, 1815, 1819, 1821

8. When did the chimney sweep Valentine Gray die
   1812, 1815, 1819, 1822

9. When did Victoria and Albert purchase Osborne House
   1835, 1840, 1845, 1850

10. When was Ventnor Promenade constructed
    1838, 1843, 1848, 1853

11. When did Dickens stay in Winterbourne Villa
    1839, 1844, 1849, 1854

12. When did Tennyson first stay in Farringford House
    1838, 1843, 1848, 1853

13. Which famous photographer bought Dimbola in Freshwater Bay
    Julia Margaret Cameron, Alice Liddell, Jenny Lind, Emily Tennyson

14. When did the first passenger railway service open on the Isle of Wight
    1857, 1862, 1867, 1872

15. When did the royal national tuberculosis hospital open in Ventnor
1859, 1864, 1869, 1874

16. Which ship sank off the Isle of Wight in 1878 with the loss of 317 lives
HMS Euridice, SS Mendi, Mary Rose, HMS Royal George

17. Which famous seismologist moved to Newtown in 1895
Robert Hooke, John Milne, David Milne-Home, Charles Richter

18. When did the Isle of Wight become an administrative county separate from Hampshire
1850, 1870, 1890, 1910

19. When did Marconi first broadcast from Knowles Farm to Cornwall
1900, 1901, 1902, 1903

20. When did the Polish destroyer Błyskawica help to save Cowes from German bombing
1939, 1940, 1941, 1942

Questions on Isle of Wight Places

1. Where is the hottest Botanic Garden on the island
   Freshwater, Mottistone, Sandown, Ventnor

2. Where is there a large rock marking the entrance to a Neolithic long barrow
   Freshwater, Mottistone, Sandown, Ventnor

3. What was the new name given to Fisher's coaching inn after entertaining Queen Victoria
   Albert Cottage Hotel, Royal Hotel, Victoria Hotel, Victoria Inn

4. Which island castle has the remains of a saxon enclosure wall
   Carisbrooke Castle, Cowes Castle, Golden Hill Fort, Yarmouth Castle

5. Which was Victoria and Albert's royal residence on the island
   Barton Manor, Carisbrooke Castle, Farringford House, Osborne House

6. Which was Tennyson's island residence
   Barton Manor, Farringford House, Osborne House, Winterbourne Villa

7. Who named their island home after their plantation in Ceylon
   Julia Margaret Cameron, Alice Liddell, Jenny Lind, Emily Tennyson

8. Which rock formation is at the western tip of the island
   Alum Bay, Arch Rock, Culver Cliff, the Needles

9. Which is the oldest amusement park in the UK
   Blackgang Chine, Needles Landmark Attraction, Robin's Hill, Shanklin Chine

10. Where is the modern lighthouse which replaced one originally built in 1323
    St Catherines, Culver Cliff, Egypt Point, the Needles

11. Where is there a railway station over the sea
    Cowes, Ryde, Shanklin, Yarmouth

12. At which National Trust property were the rules of golf defined
    Bembridge Windmill, St Helens Duver, Needles Golf Club, Ventnor Golf Club

13. Which monastic property was re-founded in 1908
    Carisbrooke Priory, St Cecilia's Abbey, St Helens Priory, Quarr Abbey

14. Which former castle is now a yacht squadron headquarters
    Albert, Cowes, Sandown, Yarmouth

15. Which wild animal gives its name to a Bike Path
Fox, Red Kite, Red Squirrel, White Tailed Eagle

16. For the fastest scheduled crossing to the mainland, where should you go
Ryde Esplanade, Ryde Pier, Isle of Wight Airport, Yarmouth

17. Where is the main bus station for the island
Cowes, Newport, Ryde, Ventnor

18. Roughly how long is the Isle of Wight Coast Path
90 kilometres, 100 kilometres, 110 kilometres, 120 kilometres

19. Which former salt pans are now a National Trust nature reserve
Afton Marsh, Bembridge Harbour, Dodnor Creek, Newtown Harbour

20. Which tourist attraction is closest to the site of the largest Isle of Wight Festival
Blackgang Chine, Medina Theatre, the Needles, Tapnell Farm

Questions on Portsmouth Events

1. When did Richard I grant Portsmouth's first charter
   1194, 1204, 1214, 1224

2. Which former hospital and alms house was founded around 1210-1214
   Domus Dei, St Marys in Fratton, St Thomas, Southwick Priory

3. When was Portsmouth raided and almost totally burnt by the French
   1328, 1338, 1348, 1358

4. When did Edward III sail from Portsmouth to fight the Crecy Campaign and capture Calais
   1338, 1346, 1360, 1415

5. When did Henry V order the Round Tower to be built
   1415, 1418, 1421, 1424

6. When did Henry VII build England's first royal dockyard at Portsmouth
   1426, 1476, 1496, 1526

7. From where did Henry VIII watch the Battle of the Solent in 1545
   Governors House, Portchester Castle, the Round Tower, Southsea Castle

8. From where did Parliamentary forces bombard Portsmouth in 1642
   Gosport, Hayling Island, Portsbridge, Portchester

9. When did Charles II marry Catherine of Braganza
   1642, 1652, 1662, 1682

10. When did Charles II order Bernard de Gomme to reconstruct Portsmouth's fortifications
    1650, 1655, 1660, 1665

11. Which ship sank off Portsmouth in 1782 with the loss of 600 lives
    HMS Edgar, HMS Euridice, Mary Rose, HMS Royal George

12. What departed from Portsmouth in 1787
    First Fleet, Cook's Endeavour, HMS Victory, HMS Warrior

13. Which flagship returned to Portsmouth with Nelson's body in 1805
    Mary Rose, Cook's Endeavour, HMS Victory, HMS Warrior

14. When did the first successful steamship ferry services between Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight begin

1820, 1825, 1830, 1835

15. When was the direct railway line between London and Portsmouth opened
1841, 1847, 1851, 1859

16. When was the world's first dreadnought battleship launched in Portsmouth
1906, 1910, 1914, 1918

17. When did Portsmouth gain city status
1926, 1936, 1946, 1956

18. When was the D-Day headquarters built under Fort Southwick
1941, 1942, 1943, 1944

19. When were the M275 and Portsmouth International Ferry Port opened
1966, 1971, 1976, 1981

20. When was the Gunwharf Quays shopping mall opened
1999, 2001, 2003, 2005

Questions on Portsmouth Places

1. What was the first name for the armament store at Gunwharf Quays
   HM Gunwharf, HMS Gunwharf, HMS Marlborough, HMS Vernon

2. Which carrack was built in Portsmouth in 1509 then rebuilt there in 1536
   Grace Dieu, Mary Rose, Mayflower, Santa Maria

3. Who built Portsmouth's first stone dry dock, which is now called No. 5 Dock
   Marc Brunel, Edmund Dummer, Bernard de Gomme, Samuel Pepys

4. Where in Portsmouth does the Gosport Ferry land
   The Camber, Gunwharf Quays, Portsmouth Harbour Station, Whale Island

5. How high is Spinnaker Tower
   150 metres, 170 metres, 190 metres, 210 metres

6. Which two places does the Millennium Promenade connect
   Gunwharf Quays & Southsea, Naval Dockyard & Clarence Pier, the Hard and Clarence Pier, the Hard & Southsea

7. Which Henry VIII device fort still survives in Portsmouth
   Fort Cumberland, Southsea Castle, Spitbank Fort, West Bastion

8. How many cathedrals are there in Portsmouth
   None, 1, 2, 3

9. What surviving building was part of the Domus Dei hospital and almshouse
   Garrison Church, St Thomas, Sally Port, Square Tower

10. Which multi-use municipal building was built in 1890 and re-built in the 1950s
    The Guildhall, Park Building, Portsmouth and Southsea Station, Roman Catholic Cathedral

11. The route through which hill was lowered 60 feet to improve stage coach journey times
    Butser Hill, Gibbet Hill, Porton Down, Southwick Hill

12. Which recreation ground hosts the Victorious Festival
    Southsea Common, the Rock Gardens, Victoria Park, Watersedge Park

13. Where is there a funfair all year
    Clarence Pier, Gunwharf Quays, Portsmouth Pier, Southsea Common

14. What is the official name of the pier in Southsea

Albert Pier, Clarence Pier, South Parade Pier, Victoria Pier

15. Which educational establishment occupies the former Cambridge Barracks
Portsmouth College, Portsmouth Grammar, Portsmouth University, Royal Naval Academy,

16. Which museum features the Overlord Embroidery
D-Day Story, Hotwalls Studios, Portsmouth Museum and Art Gallery, WWI Remembrance Centre

17. Where is Portsmouth's fishing fleet based
Camber Dock, Portsmouth Point, Rat Island, Southsea Marina

18. Which ship was saved by a public outcry after the Admiralty planned its destruction in 1831
Cutty Sark, Mary Rose, HMS Victory, HMS Warrior

19. Whose statue is in the Grand Parade
Admiral Anson, James Cook, Charles Dickens, Horatio Nelson

20. The birthplace of which famous author is now a Portsmouth museum
Jane Austen, Charles Dickens, George Meredith, Nevil Shute

Questions on Southampton Events

1. Who was accepted as the future king of England by the Saxon Witan in Southampton in 1016
   Alfred the Great, Canute, Edmund Ironsides, Harold

2. Which is the oldest surviving building in Southampton, with some parts dating to the 1070s
   Arundel Tower, the Bargate, St Mary's Church, St Michael's Church

3. Which commodity was Southampton permitted to tax by the 1275 Grant of Custom
   Beer, Glass, Wine, Wool

4. When was the French raid at the start of the 100 years war
   1337, 1338, 1346, 1415

5. Who landed in Southampton in 1554 on their way to marry Queen Mary I
   Francis Drake, Philip of Spain, Walter Raleigh, William of Orange

6. When were the Mayflower and Speedwell sail from Southampton
   1492, 1585, 1606, 1620

7. When did Nathaniel St Andre buy the Dolphin Inn / Hotel
   1548, 1742, 1750, 1806

8. Who built the elegant and fashionable Long Rooms in 1761
   Earl of Peterborough, John Martin, Nathaniel St Andre, Richard Evamy

9. Which national treasure lived in Southampton from 1806 to 1809
   Horatio Nelson, Jane Austen, Shakespeare, Sarah Siddons

10. When was the first steam packet ferry service from Southampton to the Isle of Wight
    1820, 1821, 1825, 1861

11. When did Parliament authorise the Southampton Dock Company
    1836, 1838, 1840, 1842

12. When did the London-Southampton railway open
    1836, 1838, 1840, 1842

13. Which landmark Southampton hotel opened in 1865
    Atlantic, Dolphin, Imperial, Star

14. When did Thornycroft buy a shipyard in Southampton for manufacturing destroyers
    1894, 1904, 1914, 1924

15. When did the Titanic sail from Southampton on her first and last Atlantic crossing
1908, 1910, 1912, 1914

16. How many military personnel left Southampton docks during World War I (1914-18)
1 million, 3 million, 5 million, 7 million

17. When did Supermarine build Spitfires in Woolston
1914-1918, 1936-40, 1939-1940, 1939-1945

18. How many military personnel left Southampton docks from D-Day to the end of World War II
1.5 million, 3.5 million, 5.5 million, 7.5 million

19. When did Southampton become a city
1964, 1970, 1976, 1982

20. When did Southampton FC win the FA cup
1964, 1970, 1976, 1982

Questions on Southampton Places

1. Which tourist attraction is free to visitors
City Art Gallery, Seacity Museum, Solent Sky, Tudor House Museum

2. Which tourist attraction Solent Sky has a Spitfire on display
Gods House Tower, Seacity Museum, Solent Sky, Tudor House Museum

3. Which tourist attraction has a Titanic exhibition
City Art Gallery, Gods House Tower, Seacity Museum, Solent Sky

4. Which tourist attraction was previously owned by the Lord Chief Justice
City Art Gallery, Gods House Tower, Medieval Merchants House, Tudor House Museum

5. Which tourist attraction was built as a medieval gun platform
Gods House Tower, Medieval Merchants House, Tudor House Museum, Wool House

6. Which tourist attraction is a three-part hall-house with a substantial vault
Canutes Palace, Gods House Tower, Medieval Merchants House, Wool House

7. Which medieval building stored wool waiting to be shipped abroad
Castle Vault, Medieval Merchants House, Westgate Hall, Wool House

8. Which road gives access to the Castle Vault
Castle Lane, Cement Terrace, Upper Bugle Street, Western Esplanade

9. Which is the most popular shopping mall in Southampton
Bargate, East Street, Marlands, Westquay

10. Where did relatives wait for news of the Titanic survivors
Canute Chambers, the Grapes, South Western House, the Sailors Home

11. Which was the main entrance to the Old Town
Bargate, Castle Gate, East Gate, West Gate

12. Where is there a Christmas fun fair and skateboarding in the summer
The Common, Guildhall Square, Mayflower Park, Westquay

13. Which building is dedicated to the Merchant Navy and has a monument to Titanic crew members
Civic Centre, Holyrood Church, St Mary's Church, Sailors Home

14. Where is the ferry terminal

Castle Quay, Ocean Village, Town Quay, West Quay

15. Which motorway runs along the northern edge of the Lower Test Marshes
M27, M271, M275, M3

16. Which brand runs most of Southampton buses
Bluestar, First Bus, Wheeler, Xela Bus

17. Which bridge do car drivers still have to pay to cross
Cobden Bridge, Itchen Bridge, Mansbridge, Northam Bridge

18. Which company owns the Cunard cruise line
Carnival, P&O, Princess, White Star

19. Which is Southampton Football Club's home ground
The Antelope, The Dell, the Rosebowl, St Marys Stadium

20. Which venue is owned by a charitable trust
City Art Gallery, Guildhall, Hansard Gallery, Mayflower Theatre

Questions on Solent Region Events

1. Roughly when was the Solent formed
   100000 BC, 50000 BC, 10000 BC, 5000 BC

2. When did the Normans build Winchester Castle
   1067, 1077, 1087, 1097

3. When was William the Conqueror's Domesday Book completed
   1076, 1086, 1096, 1106

4. When did fighting between Empress Matilda, Queen Matilda and Bishop Henry lead to the Rout of Winchester
   1111, 1121, 1131, 1141

5. When was the 100 years war
   1337-1437, 1337-1453, 1353-1453, 1353-1437

6. Where did Edward III's ships wait out two weeks of bad weather before the Battle of Crecy in 1346
   Portchester, Portsmouth, Southampton, Yarmouth

7. From where did the Black Death reach England in 1348
   Brittany, Flanders, Gascony, Normandy

8. When is the first record of the Hamble Ferry
   1393, 1493, 1593, 1693

9. When was the Battle of the Solent
   1345, 1445, 1545, 1645

10. Which queen married in Winchester Cathedral in 1554
    Anne, Elizabeth I, Lady Jane Grey, Mary I

11. Why was Winchester Castle demolished in 1649
    Cromwell's orders, ruined beyond repair, to build new barracks, to bury plague victims

12. When was the Itchen Navigation completed
    1610, 1660, 1710, 1760

13. During which century were the first turnpike roads first authorised in South Hampshire
    1500s, 1600s, 1700s, 1800s

14. When did regular sailing boat services between Portsmouth and Ryde begin
1796, 1806, 1816, 1826

15. Which rotten boroughs were disenfranchised by the 1832 reform act
Newport and Brading, Newport and Yarmouth, Newtown and Brading, Newtown and Yarmouth

16. Local government of which town was not reformed by the 1835 Municipal Corporation Act
Gosport, Newport, Portsmouth, Romsey

17. Which port was designated Number 1 Military Embarkation Port during World War I
Lymington, Cowes, Portsmouth, Southampton

18. When did troops leave the Solent for the D-Day landings
May 1944, June 1944, July 1944, August 1944

19. When did Vosper and Thornycroft merge
1946, 1956, 1966, 1976

20. When was the M27 motorway completed
1973, 1978, 1983, 1988

Questions on Solent Region Places

1. Where is the Hovercraft Museum
   Calshot, Cowes, Gosport, Lee on Solent

2. Where does the ferry from Warsash take you to
   Bursledon, Fawley, Gurnard, Hamble

3. Where is there a climbing wall inside a flying boat hangar
   Calshot, Hythe, Solent Sky, Woolston

4. Which theme park has been the highest rated in the UK for three years running
   Blackgang Chine, Clarence Pier, the Needles Landmark Attraction, Paultons Park

5. Which popular gardens include a steam railway
   Exbury Gardens, Furzey Gardens, Hillier Gardens, Ventnor Botanic Garden

6. Which popular garden and arboretum has one of the largest winter gardens in Europe
   Exbury Gardens, Furzey Gardens, Hillier Gardens, Ventnor Botanic Garden

7. Which mile long shingle spit guards the entrance to Southampton Water
   Calshot, Hamble, Hythe, Warsash

8. Which country park is managed by Eastleigh Borough Council
   Hamble Country Park, Itchen Country Park, Lepe Country Park, Netley Country Park

9. What is the only remaining part of Winchester Castle
   Great Hall, Guildhall, Kingsgate, Winchester College

10. Where have monarchs of England been re-crowned, married and buried
    Garrison Church, Titchfield Abbey, Portchester Castle, Winchester Cathedral

11. Which medieval hospital still provides free sustenance to pilgrims and other wayfarers
    Beaulieu, Netley, Titchfield, St Cross

12. Where is the National Motor Museum
    Beaulieu, Brockenhurst, Lyndhurst, Lymington

13. Which castle still has some of its original roman walls
    Portchester, Southampton, Winchester, Yarmouth

14. Which former abbey church is now the largest parish church in Hampshire
    Beaulieu Abbey, Romsey Abbey, Netley Abbey, Titchfield Abbey

15. Which village has a bird haven, ruined abbey, and theatre
Beaulieu, Netley, Southwick, Titchfield

16. Which monument commemorates the killing of a king of England
King Charles Bust, Mottistone Longstone, Round Table, Rufus Stone

17. How many motorways are there in South Hampshire
4, 5, 6, 7

18. How many scheduled passenger or car ferry routes are there between the mainland and the Isle of Wight
4, 5, 6, 7

19. How many railway stations south of the M27 and the A31 are still in use by passengers
15, 25, 35, 45

20. Where is there a rapid bus service following a former railway track
Gosport, Holmsley, Lee on Solent, Southsea

Answers to Questions on Isle of Wight Events

1. Who inherited lordship of the island in 1262
   Baldwin de Redvers, Edmund Crouchback, Isabella de Fortibus, Simon de Montfort
   Answer: Isabella de Fortibus
   See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isabel_de_Forz,_8th_Countess_of_Devon
2. When did French raiders set siege to Carisbrooke Castle
   1313, 1337, 1374, 1377
   Answer: 1377
   See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_the_Isle_of_Wight
3. When was Charles I imprisoned in Carisbrooke Castle
   1647-8, 1649, 1649-50, 1666
   Answer: 1647-8
   See: https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/carisbrooke-castle/history/charles-i-prisoner/
4. Why did the "Chalybeate Spring" report of 1812 attract visitors to Niton Undercliff
   gold panning, increased libido, medicinal effects, warm spa bathing
   Answer: medicinal effects
   See: https://books.google.co.uk/books/about/Report_on_the_medicinal_effects_of_an_al.html?id=KqlfAAAAcAAJ
5. When and where did the first seaside pleasure pier in the world open
   Ryde 1814, Sandown 1864, Ventnor 1833, Yarmouth 1812
   Answer: Ryde 1814
   See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ryde_Pier
6. When did Keats stay in Eglantine Cottage, Shanklin
   1789, 1812, 1815, 1819
   Answer: 1819
   See: https://keatslocations.co.uk/keats-cottage-shanklin-isle-of-wight/
7. When was the first edition of Brannon's Vectis Scenery published
   1812, 1815, 1819, 1821
   Answer: 1821
   See: https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/term/BIOG20735
8. When did the chimney sweep Valentine Gray die
   1812, 1815, 1819, 1822
   Answer: 1822
   See: https://www.wightpedia.org.uk/w/Valentine_Gray,_Memorial
9. When did Victoria and Albert purchase Osborne House
   1835, 1840, 1845, 1850
   Answer: 1845
   See: https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/osborne/history-and-stories/history/
10. When was Ventnor Promenade constructed
    1838, 1843, 1848, 1853
    Answer: 1848
    See: https://www.ventnortowncouncil.gov.uk/about-ventnor/history-of-ventnor/
11. When did Dickens stay in Winterbourne Villa

1839, 1844, 1849, 1854
Answer: 1849
See: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-hampshire-68244364

12. When did Tennyson first stay in Farringford House
1838, 1843, 1848, 1853
Answer: 1853
See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Farringford_House

13. Which famous photographer bought Dimbola in Freshwater Bay
Julia Margaret Cameron, Alice Liddell, Jenny Lind, Emily Tennyson
Answer: Julia Margaret Cameron
See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Julia_Margaret_Cameron

14. When did the first passenger railway service open on the Isle of Wight
1857, 1862, 1867, 1872
Answer: 1862
See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Railways_on_the_Isle_of_Wight

15. When did the royal national tuberculosis hospital open in Ventnor
1859, 1864, 1869, 1874
Answer: 1869
See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ventnor

16. Which ship sank off the Isle of Wight in 1878 with the loss of 317 lives
HMS Euridice, SS Mendi, Mary Rose, HMS Royal George
Answer: HMS Euridice
See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HMS_Eurydice_(1843)

17. Which famous seismologist moved to Newtown in 1895
Robert Hooke, John Milne, David Milne-Home, Charles Richter
Answer: John Milne
See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Milne

18. When did the Isle of Wight become an administrative county separate from Hampshire
1850, 1870, 1890, 1910
Answer: 1890
See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isle_of_Wight

19. When did Marconi first broadcast from Knowles Farm to Cornwall
1900, 1901, 1902, 1903
Answer: 1901
See: https://www.wightpedia.org.uk/w/Marconi_Memorial,_Knowles_Farm,_Niton

20. When did the Polish destroyer Błyskawica help to save Cowes from German bombing
1939, 1940, 1941, 1942
Answer: 1942
See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ORP_B%C5%82yskawica

Answers to Questions on Isle of Wight Places

1. Where is the hottest Botanic Garden on the island
   Freshwater, Mottistone, Sandown, Ventnor
   Answer: Ventnor
   See: https://www.botanic.co.uk
2. Where is there a large rock marking the entrance to a Neolithic long barrow
   Freshwater, Mottistone, Sandown, Ventnor
   Answer: Mottistone
   See: https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/isle-of-wight/mottistone-gardens-and-estate/the-estate-at-mottistone-gardens-and-estate
3. What was the new name given to Fisher's coaching inn after entertaining Queen Victoria
   Albert Cottage Hotel, Royal Hotel, Victoria Hotel, Victoria Inn
   Answer: Royal Hotel
   See: https://royalhoteliow.co.uk/about/our-hotel/our-history
4. Which island castle has the remains of a saxon enclosure wall
   Carisbrooke Castle, Cowes Castle, Golden Hill Fort, Yarmouth Castle
   Answer: Carisbrooke Castle
   See: https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/carisbrooke-castle/history/
5. Which was Victoria and Albert's royal residence on the island
   Barton Manor, Carisbrooke Castle, Farringford House, Osborne House
   Answer: Osborne House
   See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Osborne_House
6. Which was Tennyson's island residence
   Barton Manor, Farringford House, Osborne House, Winterbourne Villa
   Answer: Farringford House
   See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Farringford_House
7. Who named their island home after their plantation in Ceylon
   Julia Margaret Cameron, Alice Liddell, Jenny Lind, Emily Tennyson
   Answer: Julia Margaret Cameron
   See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dimbola_Museum_and_Galleries
8. Which rock formation is at the western tip of the island
   Alum Bay, Arch Rock, Culver Cliff, the Needles
   Answer: the Needles
   See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Needles
9. Which is the oldest amusement park in the UK
   Blackgang Chine, Needles Landmark Attraction, Robin's Hill, Shanklin Chine
   Answer: Blackgang Chine
   See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blackgang_Chine
10. Where is the modern lighthouse which replaced one originally built in 1323
    St Catherines, Culver Cliff, Egypt Point, the Needles
    Answer: St Catherines
    See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St_Catherine%27s_Lighthouse
11. Where is there a railway station over the sea

Cowes, Ryde, Shanklin, Yarmouth
Answer: Ryde
See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ryde_Pier_Head_railway_station

12. At which National Trust property were the rules of golf defined
Bembridge Windmill, St Helens Duver, Needles Golf Club, Ventnor Golf Club
Answer: St Helens Duver
See: https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/isle-of-wight/st-helens-duver/the-history-of-the-royal-isle-of-wight-golf-club

13. Which monastic property was re-founded in 1908
Carisbrooke Priory, St Cecilia's Abbey, St Helens Priory, Quarr Abbey
Answer: Quarr Abbey
See: https://quarrabbey.org/heritage/modern-quarr/solesmes-connection/

14. Which former castle is now a yacht squadron headquarters
Albert, Cowes, Sandown, Yarmouth
Answer: Cowes
See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Royal_Yacht_Squadron

15. Which wild animal gives its name to a Bike Path
Fox, Red Kite, Red Squirrel, White Tailed Eagle
Answer: Red Squirrel
See: https://redsquirreltrail.org.uk/

16. For the fastest scheduled crossing to the mainland, where should you go
Ryde Esplanade, Ryde Pier, Isle of Wight Airport, Yarmouth
Answer: Ryde Esplanade
See: https://www.hovertravel.co.uk/

17. Where is the main bus station for the island
Cowes, Newport, Ryde, Ventnor
Answer: Newport
See: https://www.islandbuses.info/services

18. Roughly how long is the Isle of Wight Coast Path
90 kilometres, 100 kilometres, 110 kilometres, 120 kilometres
Answer: 110 kilometres
See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isle_of_Wight_Coastal_Path

19. Which former salt pans are now a National Trust nature reserve
Afton Marsh, Bembridge Harbour, Dodnor Creek, Newtown Harbour
Answer: Newtown Harbour
See: https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/isle-of-wight/newtown-national-nature-reserve-and-old-town-hall/history-at-newtown-old-town-hall

20. Which tourist attraction is closest to the site of the largest Isle of Wight Festival
Blackgang Chine, Medina Theatre, the Needles, Tapnell Farm
Answer: Tapnell Farm
See: https://tapnellfarm.com/assets/docs/Tapnell-Trail_Map.pdf

Answers to Questions on Portsmouth Events

1. When did Richard I grant Portsmouth's first charter
   1194, 1204, 1214, 1224
   Answer: 1194
   See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Portsmouth
2. Which former hospital and alms house was founded around 1210-1214
   Domus Dei, St Marys in Fratton, St Thomas, Southwick Priory
   Answer: Domus Dei
   See: https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/royal-garrison-church-portsmouth/history/
3. When was Portsmouth raided and almost totally burnt by the French
   1328, 1338, 1348, 1358
   Answer: 1338
   See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Portsmouth
4. When did Edward III sail from Portsmouth to fight the Crecy Campaign and capture Calais
   1338, 1346, 1360, 1415
   Answer: 1346
   See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cr%C3%A9cy_campaign
5. When did Henry V order the Round Tower to be built
   1415, 1418, 1421, 1424
   Answer: 1418
   See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Portsmouth
6. When did Henry VII build England's first royal dockyard at Portsmouth
   1426, 1476, 1496, 1526
   Answer: 1496
   See: https://www.rmg.co.uk/stories/topics/englands-royal-dockyards
7. From where did Henry VIII watch the Battle of the Solent in 1545
   Governors House, Portchester Castle, the Round Tower, Southsea Castle
   Answer: Southsea Castle
   See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Southsea_Castle
8. From where did Parliamentary forces bombard Portsmouth in 1642
   Gosport, Hayling Island, Portsbridge, Portchester
   Answer: Gosport
   See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Siege_of_Portsmouth
9. When did Charles II marry Catherine of Braganza
   1642, 1652, 1662, 1682
   Answer: 1652
   See: https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/royal-garrison-church-portsmouth/history/
10. When did Charles II order Bernard de Gomme to reconstruct Portsmouth's fortifications
    1650, 1655, 1660, 1665
    Answer: 1665
    See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Portsmouth
11. Which ship sank off Portsmouth in 1782 with the loss of 600 lives

HMS Edgar, HMS Euridice, Mary Rose, HMS Royal George

Answer: HMS Royal George

See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HMS_Royal_George_(1756)

12. What departed from Portsmouth in 1787

First Fleet, Cook's Endeavour, HMS Victory, HMS Warrior

Answer: First Fleet

See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Portsmouth

13. Which flagship returned to Portsmouth with Nelson's body in 1805

Mary Rose, Cook's Endeavour, HMS Victory, HMS Warrior

Answer: HMS Victory

See: https://artuk.org/discover/artworks/hms-victory-anchored-off-the-isle-of-wight-25950

14. When did the first successful steamship ferry services between Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight begin

1820, 1825, 1830, 1835

Answer: 1825

See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isle_of_Wight_ferry_services

15. When was the direct railway line between London and Portsmouth opened

1841, 1847, 1851, 1859

Answer: 1859

See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Portsmouth

16. When was the world's first dreadnought battleship launched in Portsmouth

1906, 1910, 1914, 1918

Answer: 1906

See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HMS_Dreadnought_(1906)

17. When did Portsmouth gain city status

1926, 1936, 1946, 1956

Answer: 1926

See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Portsmouth

18. When was the D-Day headquarters built under Fort Southwick

1941, 1942, 1943, 1944

Answer: 1942

See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fort_Southwick

19. When were the M275 and Portsmouth International Ferry Port opened

1966, 1971, 1976, 1981

Answer: 1976

See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portsmouth_International_Port

20. When was the Gunwharf Quays shopping mall opened

1999, 2001, 2003, 2005

Answer: 2001

See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gunwharf_Quays

Answers to Questions on Portsmouth Places

1. What was the first name for the armament store at Gunwharf Quays
   HM Gunwharf, HMS Gunwharf, HMS Marlborough, HMS Vernon
   Answer: HM Gunwharf
   See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gunwharf_Quays
2. Which carrack was built in Portsmouth in 1509 then rebuilt there in 1536
   Grace Dieu, Mary Rose, Mayflower, Santa Maria
   Answer: Mary Rose
   See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HMNB_Portsmouth
3. Who built Portsmouth's first stone dry dock, which is now called No. 5 Dock
   Marc Brunel, Edmund Dummer, Bernard de Gomme, Samuel Pepys
   Answer: Edmund Dummer
   See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HMNB_Portsmouth
4. Where in Portsmouth does the Gosport Ferry land
   The Camber, Gunwharf Quays, Portsmouth Harbour Station, Whale Island
   Answer: Portsmouth Harbour Station
   See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portsmouth_Harbour_railway_station
5. How high is Spinnaker Tower
   150 metres, 170 metres, 190 metres, 210 metres
   Answer 170 metres
   See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spinnaker_Tower
6. Which two places does the Millennium Promenade connect
   Gunwharf Quays & Southsea, Naval Dockyard & Clarence Pier, the Hard and Clarence Pier, the Hard & Southsea
   Answer: Gunwharf Quays & Southsea
   See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Southsea
7. Which Henry VIII device fort still survives in Portsmouth
   Fort Cumberland, Southsea Castle, Spitbank Fort, West Bastion
   Answer: Southsea Castle
   See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Device_Forts
8. How many cathedrals are there in Portsmouth
   None, 1, 2, 3
   Answer: 2
   See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_places_of_worship_in_Portsmouth
9. What surviving building was part of the Domus Dei hospital and almshouse
   Garrison Church, St Thomas, Sally Port, Square Tower
   Answer: Garrison Church
   See: https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/royal-garrison-church-portsmouth/
10. Which multi-use municipal building was built in 1890 and re-built in the 1950s
    The Guildhall, Park Building, Portsmouth and Southsea Station, Roman Catholic Cathedral
    Answer: The Guildhall
    See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portsmouth_Guildhall

11. The route through which hill was lowered 60 feet to improve stage coach journey times
Butser Hill, Gibbet Hill, Porton Down, Southwick Hill
Answer: Butser Hill
See: http://buriton.org.uk/history/local-roads-stage-coaches-and-highwaymen/
12. Which recreation ground hosts the Victorious Festival
Southsea Common, the Rock Gardens, Victoria Park, Watersedge Park
Answer: Southsea Common
See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Southsea#Southsea_Common
13. Where is there a funfair all year
Clarence Pier, Gunwharf Quays, Portsmouth Pier, Southsea Common
Answer: Clarence Pier
See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clarence_Pier
14. What is the official name of the pier in Southsea
Albert Pier, Clarence Pier, South Parade Pier, Victoria Pier
Answer: South Parade Pier
See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_Parade_Pier
15. Which educational establishment occupies the former Cambridge Barracks
Portsmouth College, Portsmouth Grammar, Portsmouth University, Royal Naval Academy,
Answer: Portsmouth Grammar
See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cambridge_Barracks,_Portsmouth
16. Which museum features the Overlord Embroidery
D-Day Story, Hotwalls Studios, Portsmouth Museum and Art Gallery, WWI Remembrance Centre
Answer: D-Day Story
See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_D-Day_Story
17. Where is Portsmouth's fishing fleet based
Camber Dock, Portsmouth Point, Rat Island, Southsea Marina
Answer: Camber Dock
See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portsmouth_Harbour#Camber_Dock
18. Which ship was saved by a public outcry after the Admiralty planned its destruction in 1831
Cutty Sark, Mary Rose, HMS Victory, HMS Warrior
Answer: HMS Victory
See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HMS_Victory
19. Whose statue is in the Grand Parade
Admiral Anson, James Cook, Charles Dickens, Horatio Nelson
Answer: Horatio Nelson
See: https://www.memorialsinportsmouth.co.uk/old-portsmouth/nelson.htm
20. The birthplace of which famous author is now a Portsmouth museum
Jane Austen, Charles Dickens, George Meredith, Nevil Shute
Answer: Charles Dickens
See: https://www.visitportsmouth.co.uk/things-to-do/charles-dickens-birthplace-museum-p221281

Answers to Questions on Southampton Events

1. Who was accepted as the future king of England by the Saxon Witan in Southampton in 1016
   Alfred the Great, Canute, Edmund Ironsides, Harold
   Answer: Canute
   See: https://historum.com/t/the-witan-of-england-one-or-more.133849/
2. Which is the oldest surviving building in Southampton, with some parts dating to the 1070s
   Arundel Tower, the Bargate, St Mary's Church, St Michael's Church
   Answer: St Michael's Church
   See: http://sotonopedia.wikidot.com/page-browse:st-michaels-church-and-parish
3. Which commodity was Southampton permitted to tax by the 1275 Grant of Custom
   Beer, Glass, Wine, Wool
   Answer: Wool
   See: http://sotonopedia.wikidot.com/page-browse:wool-trade
4. When was the French raid at the start of the 100 years war
   1337, 1338, 1346, 1415
   Answer: 1338
   See: http://sotonopedia.wikidot.com/page-browse:french-raid
5. Who landed in Southampton in 1554 on their way to marry Queen Mary I
   Francis Drake, Philip of Spain, Walter Raleigh, William of Orange
   Answer: Philip of Spain
   See: https://www.hantsfieldclub.org.uk/publications/hampshirestudies/digital/1960s/vol22/Himsworth.pdf
6. When were the Mayflower and Speedwell sail from Southampton
   1492, 1585, 1606, 1620
   Answer: 1620
   See: https://www.mayflower400uk.org/visit/southampton/
7. When did Nathaniel St Andre buy the Dolphin Inn / Hotel
   1548, 1742, 1750, 1806
   Answer: 1742
   See: http://sotonopedia.wikidot.com/page-browse:dolphin-hotel
8. Who built the elegant and fashionable Long Rooms in 1761
   Earl of Peterborough, John Martin, Nathaniel St Andre, Richard Evamy
   Answer: John Martin
   See: http://sotonopedia.wikidot.com/page-browse:long-rooms
9. Which national treasure lived in Southampton from 1806 to 1809
   Horatio Nelson, Jane Austen, Shakespeare, Sarah Siddons
   Answer: Jane Austen
   See: https://historicsouthampton.co.uk/austen/
10. When was the first steam packet ferry service from Southampton to the Isle of Wight
    1820, 1821, 1825, 1861
    Answer: 1820
    See: https://www.dailyecho.co.uk/news/18477119.200-years-steamships-southampton/
11. When did Parliament authorise the Southampton Dock Company

1836, 1838, 1840, 1842

Answer: 1836

See: https://www.hantsfieldclub.org.uk/publications/hampshirestudies/digital/1980s/vol44/Course1_note3.pdf

12. When did the London-Southampton railway open

1836, 1838, 1840, 1842

Answer: 1840

See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/London_and_Southampton_Railway

13. Which landmark Southampton hotel opened in 1865

Atlantic, Dolphin, Imperial, Star

Answer: Imperial

See: http://sotonopedia.wikidot.com/page-browse:south-western-hotel

14. When did Thornycroft buy a shipyard in Southampton for manufacturing destroyers

1894, 1904, 1914, 1924

Answer: 1904

See: http://sotonopedia.wikidot.com/page-browse:thornycroft-sir-john-isaac

15. When did the Titanic sail from Southampton on her first and last Atlantic crossing

1908, 1910, 1912, 1914

Answer: 1912

See: http://sotonopedia.wikidot.com/page-browse:titanic

16. How many military personnel left Southampton docks during World War I (1914-18)

1 million, 3 million, 5 million, 7 million

Answer: 7 million

See: https://maritimearchaeologytrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Ports-in-WW1-updated-to-new-Template-6.03.2021-RB.pdf

17. When did Supermarine build Spitfires in Woolston

1914-1918, 1936-40, 1939-1940, 1939-1945

Answer: 1936-1940

See: https://supermariners.wordpress.com/the-places/southampton/the-supermarine-works-1936-1939/southampton-airport-1936-1939/

18. How many military personnel left Southampton docks from D-Day to the end of World War II

1.5 million, 3.5 million, 5.5 million, 7.5 million

Answer: 3.5 million

See: https://maritimearchaeologytrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Southampton-D-Day-the-Wall-and-the-Mayflower-sites-2.docx.pdf

19. When did Southampton become a city

1964, 1970, 1976, 1982

Answer: 1964

See: https://www.southampton.gov.uk/news/article/southampton-celebrates-60-years-of-city-status/

20. When did Southampton FC win the FA cup

1964, 1970, 1976, 1982

Answer: 1976

See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1976_FA_Cup_final

Answers to Questions on Southampton Places

1. Which tourist attraction is free to visitors
City Art Gallery, Seacity Museum, Solent Sky, Tudor House Museum
Answer: City Art Gallery
See: https://southamptoncityartgallery.com/visit/history/
2. Which tourist attraction Solent Sky has a Spitfire on display
Gods House Tower, Seacity Museum, Solent Sky, Tudor House Museum
Answer: Solent Sky
See: https://www.solentsky.org/exhibitions
3. Which tourist attraction has a Titanic exhibition
City Art Gallery, Gods House Tower, Seacity Museum, Solent Sky
Answer: Seacity Museum
See: https://seacitymuseum.co.uk/
4. Which tourist attraction was previously owned by the Lord Chief Justice
City Art Gallery, Gods House Tower, Medieval Merchants House, Tudor House Museum
Answer: Tudor House
See: http://sotonopedia.wikidot.com/page-browse:tudor-house
5. Which tourist attraction was built as a medieval gun platform
Gods House Tower, Medieval Merchants House, Tudor House Museum, Wool House
Answer: Gods House Tower
See: http://sotonopedia.wikidot.com/page-browse:god-s-house-gate-and-tower
6. Which tourist attraction is a three-part hall-house with a substantial vault
Canutes Palace, Gods House Tower, Medieval Merchants House, Wool House
Answer: Medieval Merchants House
See: http://sotonopedia.wikidot.com/page-browse:medieval-merchants-house-58-french-street
7. Which medieval building stored wool waiting to be shipped abroad
Castle Vault, Medieval Merchants House, Westgate Hall, Wool House
Answer: Wool House
See: http://sotonopedia.wikidot.com/page-browse:wool-house
8. Which road gives access to the Castle Vault
Castle Lane, Cement Terrace, Upper Bugle Street, Western Esplanade
Answer: Western Esplanade
See: https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MSH710&resourceID=1016
9. Which is the most popular shopping mall in Southampton
Bargate, East Street, Marlands, Westquay
Answer: Westquay
See: https://www.hammerson.com/destinations/westquay
10. Where did relatives wait for news of the Titanic survivors
Canute Chambers, the Grapes, South Western House, the Sailors Home
Answer: Canute Chambers
See: http://sotonopedia.wikidot.com/page-browse:canute-chambers
11. Which was the main entrance to the Old Town

Bargate, Castle Gate, East Gate, West Gate
Answer: Bargate
See: http://sotonopedia.wikidot.com/page-browse:bargate
12. Where is there a Christmas fun fair and skateboarding in the summer
The Common, Guildhall Square, Mayflower Park, Westquay
Answer: Guildhall Square
See: https://skatesouthampton.com/slamma
13. Which building is dedicated to the Merchant Navy and has a monument to Titanic crew members
Civic Centre, Holyrood Church, St Mary's Church, Sailors Home
Answer: Holyrood Church
See: http://sotonopedia.wikidot.com/page-browse:holy-rood-church
14. Where is the ferry terminal
Castle Quay, Ocean Village, Town Quay, West Quay
Answer: Town Quay
See: https://www.redfunnel.co.uk/isle-of-wight-ferry/plan/terminals/1-southampton
15. Which motorway runs along the northern edge of the Lower Test Marshes
M27, M271, M275, M3
Answer: M27
See: https://www.hiwwt.org.uk/sites/default/files/2018-05/Lower-Test-Leaflet-web.pdf
16. Which brand runs most of Southampton buses
Bluestar, First Bus, Wheeler, Xela Bus
Answer: Bluestar
See: https://www.bluestarbus.co.uk/about-bluestar
17. Which bridge do car drivers still have to pay to cross
Cobden Bridge, Itchen Bridge, Mansbridge, Northam Bridge
Answer: Itchen Bridge
See: https://www.southampton.gov.uk/travel-transport/apply-pay/itchen-bridge/
18. Which company owns the Cunard cruise line
Carnival, P&O, Princess, White Star
Answer: Carnival
See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carnival_Corporation_%26_plc
19. Which is Southampton Football Club's home ground
The Antelope, The Dell, the Rosebowl, St Marys Stadium
Answer: St Marys Stadium
See: http://sotonopedia.wikidot.com/page-browse:southampton-football-club
20. Which venue is owned by a charitable trust
City Art Gallery, Guildhall, Hansard Gallery, Mayflower Theatre
Answer: Mayflower Theatre
See: https://www.mayflower.org.uk/about/our-story/

Answers to Questions on Solent Region Events

1. Roughly when was the Solent formed
   100000 BC, 50000 BC, 10000 BC, 5000 BC
   Answer: 5000 BC
   See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Solent
2. When did the Normans build Winchester Castle
   1067, 1077, 1087, 1097
   Answer: 1067
   See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Winchester_Castle
3. When was William the Conqueror's Domesday Book completed
   1076, 1086, 1096, 1106
   Answer: 1086
   See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Domesday_Book
4. When did fighting between Empress Matilda, Queen Matilda and Bishop Henry lead to the Rout of Winchester
   1111, 1121, 1131, 1141
   Answer: 1141
   See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rout_of_Winchester
5. When was the 100 years war
   1337-1437, 1337-1453, 1353-1453, 1353-1437
   Answer: 1337-1453
   See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hundred_Years%27_War
6. Where did Edward III's ships wait out two weeks of bad weather before the Battle of Crecy in 1346
   Portchester, Portsmouth, Southampton, Yarmouth
   Answer: Yarmouth
   See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cr%C3%A9cy_campaign
7. From where did the Black Death reach England in 1348
   Brittany, Flanders, Gascony, Normandy
   Answer: Gascony
   See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black_Death_in_England
8. When is the first record of the Hamble Ferry
   1393, 1493, 1593, 1693
   Answer: 1493
   See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hamble%E2%80%93Warsash_Ferry
9. When was the Battle of the Solent
   1345, 1445, 1545, 1645
   Answer: 1545
   See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_the_Solent
10. Which queen married in Winchester Cathedral in 1554
    Anne, Elizabeth I, Lady Jane Grey, Mary I
    Answer: Mary I
    See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wedding_of_Mary_I_of_England_and_Philip_of_Spain

11. Why was Winchester Castle demolished in 1649
Cromwell's orders, ruined beyond repair, to build new barracks, to bury plague victims
Answer: Cromwell's orders
See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Winchester_Castle
12. When was the Itchen Navigation completed
1610, 1660, 1710, 1760
Answer: 1710
See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Itchen_Navigation
13. During which century were the first turnpike roads first authorised in South Hampshire
1500s, 1600s, 1700s, 1800s
Answer: 1700s
See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Turnpike_trust
14. When did regular sailing boat services between Portsmouth and Ryde begin
1796, 1806, 1816, 1826
Answer: 1796
Answer: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isle_of_Wight_ferry_services
15. Which rotten boroughs were disenfranchised by the 1832 reform act
Newport and Brading, Newport and Yarmouth, Newtown and Brading, Newtown and Yarmouth
Answer: Newtown and Yarmouth
See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rotten_and_pocket_boroughs
16. Local government of which town was not reformed by the 1835 Municipal Corporation Act
Gosport, Newport, Portsmouth, Romsey
Answer: Gosport
See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gosport_Borough_Council
17. Which port was designated Number 1 Military Embarkation Port during World War I
Lymington, Cowes, Portsmouth, Southampton
Answer: Southampton
See: https://www.cwgc.org/our-work/blog/southampton-during-ww1-and-ww2/
18. When did troops leave the Solent for the D-Day landings
May 1944, June 1944, July 1944, August 1944
Answer: June 1944
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Overlord
19. When did Vosper and Thornycroft merge
1946, 1956, 1966, 1976
Answer: 1966
See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vosper_Thorneycroft
20. When was the M27 motorway completed
1973, 1978, 1983, 1988
Answer: 1983
See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/M27_motorway

Answers to Questions on Solent Region Places

1. Where is the Hovercraft Museum
   Calshot, Cowes, Gosport, Lee on Solent
   Answer: Lee on Solent
   See: https://hovercraft-museum.org/
2. Where does the ferry from Warsash take you to
   Bursledon, Fawley, Gurnard, Hamble
   Answer: Hamble
   See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hamble%E2%80%93Warsash_Ferry
3. Where is there a climbing wall inside a flying boat hangar
   Calshot, Hythe, Solent Sky, Woolston
   Answer: Calshot
   See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/RAF_Calshot
4. Which theme park has been the highest rated in the UK for three years running
   Blackgang Chine, Clarence Pier, the Needles Landmark Attraction, Paultons Park
   Answer: Paultons Park
   See: https://www.ukthemeparkspy.co.uk/how-paultons-park-became-a-top-uk-theme-park-destination/
5. Which popular gardens include a steam railway
   Exbury Gardens, Furzey Gardens, Hillier Gardens, Ventnor Botanic Garden
   Answer: Exbury Gardens
   See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Exbury_Gardens
6. Which popular garden and arboretum has one of the largest winter gardens in Europe
   Exbury Gardens, Furzey Gardens, Hillier Gardens, Ventnor Botanic Garden
   Answer: Hillier Gardens
   See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sir_Harold_Hillier_Gardens
7. Which mile long shingle spit guards the entrance to Southampton Water
   Calshot, Hamble, Hythe, Warsash
   Answer: Calshot
   See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Calshot
8. Which country park is managed by Eastleigh Borough Council
   Hamble Country Park, Itchen Country Park, Lepe Country Park, Netley Country Park
   Answer: Itchen Country Park
   See: https://www.eastleigh.gov.uk/parks-leisure-and-culture/country-parks-and-open-spaces/
9. What is the only remaining part of Winchester Castle
   Great Hall, Guildhall, Kingsgate, Winchester College
   Answer: Great Hall
   See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Winchester_Castle
10. Where have monarchs of England been re-crowned, married and buried
    Garrison Church, Titchfield Abbey, Portchester Castle, Winchester Cathedral
    Answer: Winchester Cathedral
    See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Winchester_Cathedral
11. Which medieval hospital still provides free sustenance to pilgrims and other wayfarers

Beaulieu, Netley, Titchfield, St Cross
Answer: St Cross
See: https://hospitalofstcross.co.uk/visiting-st-cross/

12. Where is the National Motor Museum
Beaulieu, Brockenhurst, Lyndhurst, Lymington
Answer: Beaulieu
See: https://www.beaulieu.co.uk/

13. Which castle still has some of its original roman walls
Portchester, Southampton, Winchester, Yarmouth
Answer: Portchester
See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portchester_Castle

14. Which former abbey church is now the largest parish church in Hampshire
Beaulieu Abbey, Romsey Abbey, Netley Abbey, Titchfield Abbey
Answer: Romsey Abbey
See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Romsey_Abbey

15. Which village has a bird haven, ruined abbey, and theatre
Beaulieu, Netley, Southwick, Titchfield
Answer: Titchfield
See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Titchfield

16. Which monument commemorates the killing of a king of England
King Charles Bust, Mottistone Longstone, Round Table, Rufus Stone
Answer: Rufus Stone
See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_II_of_England#Rufus_Stone

17. How many motorways are there in South Hampshire
4, 5, 6, 7
Answer: 5
See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_motorways_in_the_United_Kingdom

18. How many scheduled passenger or car ferry routes are there between the mainland and the Isle of Wight
4, 5, 6, 7
Answer: 6
See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_East_Hampshire_Bus_Rapid_Transit

19. How many railway stations south of the M27 and the A31 are still in use by passengers
15, 25, 35, 45
Answer: 35
See: https://visitbytrain.info/hants/

20. Where is there a rapid bus service following a former railway track
Gosport, Holmsley, Lee on Solent, Southsea
Answer: Gosport
See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_East_Hampshire_Bus_Rapid_Transit

Appendix

Sources

Most sections of this guide include a list of sources and suggestions for further reading.

A consolidated list of sources will be included here in the revised edition.

If you find a broken link, please email me at gravellandy@gmail.com.

For completeness broken links will be preserved, but with ~~struck through text~~. It is always possible that the missing web page could be re-activated at a later date.